



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
SW1P 4DF

T: 03459 335577
helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

6 July 2022

Dear Consultee,

Consultation on sites proposed for designation as Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs).

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) invites your views on the proposal to designate a number of sites as pilot Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) in English waters. This consultation is being carried out by Defra and will be open from 6 July 2022 to 28 September 2022.

We want to continue protecting and improving the health of the marine environment and also support sustainable use. Protecting our oceans can have a positive impact on climate change resilience and can address biodiversity loss which will deliver benefits for society and human health.

The purpose of HPMAs is the protection and recovery of marine biodiversity. HPMAs will take a 'whole site approach', conserving all species and habitats within the HPMA boundary. By setting aside some areas of sea with high levels of protection, HPMAs will allow nature to recover to a more natural state. This will contribute to the government's vision for 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse ocean and seas.'

We are consulting on five candidate HPMAs and propose to designate a number of these as pilot HPMAs within a year of this consultation. We will use powers in the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to designate the HPMAs as marine conservation zones. The candidate HPMAs overlap with existing marine protected areas and will complement the existing marine protected area network in English waters.

To achieve high levels of protection some activities will need to be restricted in HPMAs. However, HPMAs are not no-go zones and many activities, especially recreational ones happening at non-damaging levels, will still be able to occur. This consultation will seek to understand the impacts of HPMAs on you, your business and the environment.

The following documents may be found on Defra's website:

- Consultation Document and annexes
- Factsheets on proposed sites



- Impact Assessment

We welcome your views and comments on the proposals. You can view the consultation documents on GOV.UK

If you wish to obtain a copy of this consultation, please email: hpma@defra.gov.uk

Responses

To submit your consultation response please:

- complete the consultation questionnaire provided through Citizen Space (Citizen Space is an online consultation tool).
- or send additional information or documents to the HPMA team by email to hpma@defra.gov.uk
- respond by post to the HPMA team using the address below.

Responses should be received by 28 September 2022.

Written responses can be submitted to:

Highly Protected Marine Areas team
Defra
2 Marsham Street
Seacole Building
1st Floor
SW1P 4DF

Consultation criteria

This consultation is being conducted in line with the Cabinet Office "[Consultation Principles](#)".

Confidentiality and data protection

Please find the Consultations Privacy Notice uploaded alongside this consultation.

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes these are

primarily the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs), the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

We have obligations, mainly under the EIRs, FOIA and DPA, to disclose information to particular recipients or to the public in certain circumstances.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential.

If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to:

Consultation Coordinator
2nd floor
Foss House
Kings Pool
1-2 Peasholme Green
York
YO1 7PX
Or email: consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk

After the end of the consultation period we will summarise the responses and place this summary on gov.uk.

Copies of responses will be made available to the public on request. If you do not want your response – including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation.

If you have any queries, please contact us as above.

Yours sincerely,

Highly Protected Marine Areas team

Defra