

Highly Protected Marine Areas: Call for evidence

October 2019



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Introduction

1. In June 2019, the government announced an independent review into Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs). The review is being undertaken by a seven strong independent panel led by Richard Benyon MP. Details are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highly-protected-marine-areas-hpmas-review-2019/highly-protected-marine-areas-review-terms-of-reference>
2. HPMAs represent the upper end of environmental protection and could complement the existing network of Marine Protected Areas, allowing vulnerable marine wildlife to recover, free from damaging human activities. The geographical scope of the Review covers English inshore and offshore waters and Northern Irish offshore waters.
3. The Review seeks to establish an evidence-based process and criteria for selecting HPMAs and, if supported by the evidence, to recommend potential locations for pilot sites. The Panel is considering the environmental and societal benefits of establishing HPMAs alongside the potential economic and social impacts on businesses and individuals who use the sea. We want to take into account the views of fishers, conservation bodies, marine industries, local communities, other interested groups and the wider public.
4. The advisory panel are carrying out visits around the country to hear from as many people as possible but we want this Call for Evidence to provide everyone with the chance to contribute to the Review. The responses we receive will help to inform and shape the panel's final recommendations which are aiming to be published in early 2020. Please note that the panel will not reply directly to responses.
5. The questions are a guide and so please do not feel you must answer them all or write a great length. We have not set a word limit as we appreciate that some individuals or organisation may wish to reply in detail. However, we do ask that where possible answers are kept to 500 words or less.

Call for evidence objectives

6. This Call for Evidence seeks your views on whether and how HPMAs could be introduced. It will support the Review by allowing a diverse range of opinions, experience and expertise to be heard. In particular we want to hear about your views on:
 - a. Aims, opportunities and challenges of HPMAs
 - b. HPMA site selection
 - c. Implementation and management of HPMAs
 - d. Past experiences of MPAs

How to respond

7. The call for evidence is open for four weeks from 3 October 2019 and closes on 31 October 2019.
8. You can respond to the Call for Evidence through Citizen Space. Alternatively please submit your responses in any of the following ways:

By email: HPMAreview@defra.gov.uk

By post:
HPMA review, Marine and Fisheries
4th Floor, Horizon House
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AH

Confidentiality and data protection

9. This Call for Evidence document and consultation process adheres to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.
10. 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.
11. Information provided in response to this Call for Evidence, 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). Defra has obligations, mainly under the EIRs, FOIA and DPA, to disclose information to particular recipients or to the public in certain circumstances.
12. 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.
13. This Call for Evidence is being conducted in line with the Cabinet Office “Consultation Principles” and be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance.
14. If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to:
Defra Consultation Coordinator

Area 6B, 6th Floor
Nobel House
17 Smith Square,
London, SW1P 3JR.

Or email: consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk

15. For more information about what we do with the data provided, please request our privacy notice from HPMAreview@defra.gov.uk.

Call for evidence questions

Question 1: Would you like your response to be confidential?

- Yes
- No

Question 1a: If you answered yes to this question please give your reason.

About you

Question 2: Are you responding to this call for evidence on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?

- on behalf of an organisation
- as an individual
- don't know
- prefer not to say

Question 2a: If responding on behalf of an organisation:

- i. Which organisation(s) are you responding on behalf of?
- ii. What is the position you hold at the organisation(s)?

Question 2b: If responding as an individual, which of the following best describes your current employment status? Tick all that apply.

- Full-time paid work or self-employment (30+ hours per week)
- Part-time paid work or self-employment (under 30 hours per week)
- Retired
- In education
- Unemployed (Seeking work)
- Not in paid employment (not seeking work)

Question 2c: If employed or retired, briefly describe the main business activity of your company /organisation? If you are self-employed, or looking for work, please indicate what type of work you do?

Question 3: How old are you? Please tick one of the boxes below.

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75+
- Prefer not to say

Question 4: What is your gender? Please tick one of the boxes below.

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Question 5: Which region of the UK do you live in? Please tick one of the boxes below.

- East Midlands
- East of England
- London
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire & the Humber
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- Don't know/ prefer not to say

Question 6: Which of the following best describes where you live? Please tick one of the boxes below.

- Urban – coastal
- Urban – non coastal
- Rural – coastal
- Rural – non coastal
- Don't know / prefer not to say

Part 1: HPMAs aims, opportunities and challenges

Question 7: To what extent do you agree with the following reasons for introducing HPMAs?

- to provide marine areas a chance to return to as natural a state as possible
- to provide a reliable measure of what recovery could look like if all damaging human activities were removed
- to act as no take zones, allowing commercially fished species to recover and for these benefits to spill outside of the protected area
- to better protect sensitive and/ or ecologically important species and habitats
- to look after our seas as part of our duty as stewards of the natural environment
- to better prevent or lessen the effects of climate change, for example to protect habitats that can capture carbon or protect species that are vulnerable to a warming ocean
- to preserve and increase opportunities for nature-based tourism
- to support or improve opportunities for cultural, spiritual, educational and/or recreational activities
- other – please specify

Question 8: Do you have any experience or examples relevant to the UK where you believe HPMAs or similar have been effective or ineffective? Please provide any relevant evidence.

Question 9: Do you see any challenges to the introduction of HPMAs? If so, how could these challenges be addressed? Please provide any relevant evidence.

Question 10: What is your opinion of the evidence for HPMAs? Where is more evidence required?

Question 11: The UK already has a network of MPAs that includes Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). How could HPMAs complement and enhance the current designations in English inshore and offshore waters and Northern Irish offshore waters?

Part 2: HPMA site selection

Question 12: What evidence and factors should be considered when selecting sites for HPMAs and who should be engaged in the process?

Question 13: Are there any locations where it would be particularly beneficial: (i) for a location to become an HPMA or (ii) an existing or part of an existing MPA to become an HPMA? Please could you state these in the box below and provide any relevant evidence.

Part 3: Future implementation and management of HPMAs

Question 14: What would be the most appropriate way of managing and monitoring HPMAs? How do you think this could fit alongside existing marine management?

Part 4: Your past experience of the Marine Protected Areas (MPA) identification, designation, and management process

In this section, we are keen to hear from people who have had any involvement in the identification, designation or management of MPAs. Whilst this Review is considering HPMAs in relation to areas of English inshore and offshore waters and Northern Ireland offshore waters, we are interested in learning from experience of MPAs from across the UK. This information will help to inform the process for considering implementation of any potential future HPMAs.

Question 15: Have you been involved in the identification, designation or management of MPAs in the UK previously?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

Question 15a: If yes, we would like to learn from your experience of being involved in MPA identification, designation and management. Please could you provide information on:

- the name of the MPA(s) and your role and involvement
- what worked well?
- what could be improved?

Question 16: How has stakeholder and local knowledge been included in previous processes to introduce MPAs (inshore or offshore)? Please can you comment on whether and how this knowledge can better be integrated in future processes associated with HPMAs?

Part 5. Any other comments

Question 17: Are there any other comments you would like to make in regard to HPMAs?