

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

## **Celtic Deep**

**Candidate Marine Conservation Zone not  
proposed for designation in the second tranche**

**January 2015**

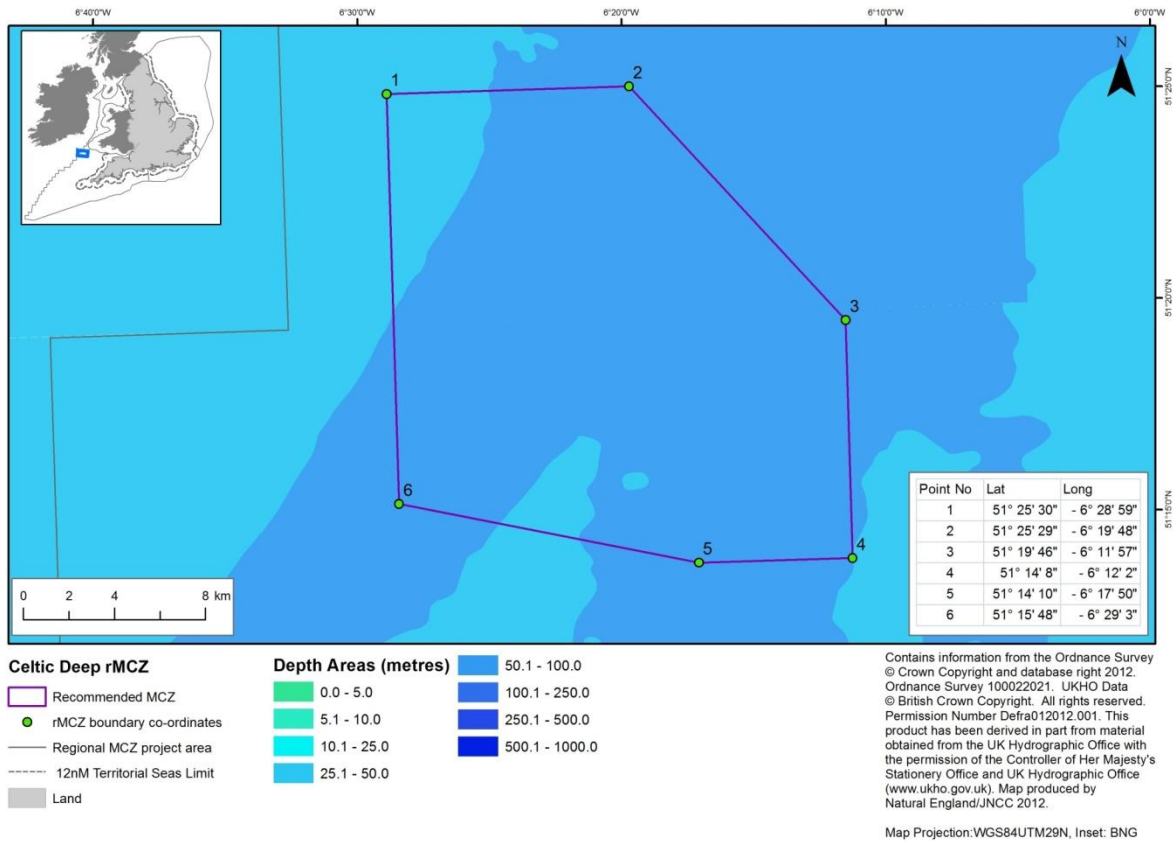
**Consultation on Sites Proposed for Designation in the Second Tranche  
of Marine Conservation Zones**

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# Where the site is located

Celtic Deep candidate Marine Conservation Zones (cMCZ) is an offshore site which covers an area of 348 km<sup>2</sup>. The southern tip of the site is approximately 112 km to the North-West of Trevoze Head in Cornwall, and the northern tip is approximately 84 km from the Pembrokeshire coast in Wales. The site forms a depression on the seafloor compared to the surrounding area with water depths of between 100 - 200 metres within the site.



# Why this was site identified as a candidate site for the second tranche

Celtic Deep cMCZ overlaps with an area of high benthic species biodiversity. The site provides an important contribution to the marine protected area (MPA) network by protecting subtidal sediment habitats, and a large area of subtidal mud in the region, which is a habitat for sea-pens and burrowing megafauna communities.

## Features considered for designation

The features considered for designation in this site were:

- subtidal mud,
- mud habitats in deep water,
- sea-pen and burrowing megafauna communities.

## Effects of designation

If the cMCZ was to be designated in its current form, the following activities would likely be affected by management. This information will be updated if a revised site proposal is recommended for designation at a later date.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Best Cost Estimate (£) per year</b>	<b>Details</b>
UK commercial fishing	1,100	This cMCZ is located in south-western corner of the most productive nephrops fishery in the south-west marine area. Approximately three quarters of UK bottom trawl commercial fishing activity in the area around the cMCZ is from Northern Ireland.
Non-UK commercial fishing	Unquantified	Non-UK fishing vessels using static gears, bottom trawls/dredges and mid-water trawls fish within the cMCZ. The majority of commercial fishing activity within the cMCZ is by vessels from the Republic of Ireland, with vessels from France and Belgium also operating within the site.
<b>Best estimate total cost</b>	<b>1,100</b>	

## Activities that are unlikely to be affected

These activities are known to take place at this site but are not likely to be damaging to the features identified at their current levels of intensity:

- cables (four existing interconnectors and telecom cables intersect),
- commercial fisheries - mid-water trawls
- transit of ships.

## Why this candidate site is not being proposed for designation in the second tranche

Defra is responsible for designating cMCZs in the offshore waters adjacent to Wales. Five sites which were proposed as candidates for the second tranche are in these waters. This includes Celtic Deep.

Since this site was identified by the regional projects as a cMCZ, the Silk Commission, which was an independent commission established to review what powers should be devolved to the Welsh government, recommended that offshore waters adjacent to Wales should be the responsibility of the Welsh government. The UK government has not yet responded to these recommendations but, given this is currently under consideration, we do not consider it appropriate to take forward sites in the offshore waters adjacent to Wales at this time.

## Further consideration

The UK government response to the Silk Commission's second report will confirm if responsibility for these waters will transfer to the Welsh government. Following this response, sites will either be considered by the Welsh government, which has an ongoing programme to designate MCZs, or will remain with the UK government for consideration as part of the third tranche.

## Additional information

To read the full consultation document, or respond to the consultation, please visit

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/marine/tranche2mczs>

To read the advice provided by JNCC, please visit

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6658>

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