



BY EMAIL ONLY

1 February 2021

Dear stakeholder,

### **Formal consultation on a draft MMO byelaw for the South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)**

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is seeking views on a draft byelaw to managing fishing in the South Dorset MCZ.

This letter provides a background to the MCZ and the role of the MMO, a brief summary of known fishing activity in the site, the proposed management measure, supplementary information, and information on how to respond to formal consultation and what to expect next.

### **Background**

South Dorset MCZ was formally designated on 12 December 2013. Moderate energy circalittoral rock was added as a protected feature on 29 January 2016. High energy circalittoral rock was added as a protected feature on 31 May 2019. The site has four designated features:

- Subtidal coarse sediment
- Subtidal chalk
- Moderate energy circalittoral rock
- High energy circalittoral rock

A map showing South Dorset MCZ and the location of its features is provided at the end of this letter.

The conservation objectives for South Dorset MCZ are set out in the site's designation order and are that the habitats:

- so far as already in favourable condition, remain in such condition; and



- so far as not already in favourable condition, be brought into such condition, and remain in such condition.

Natural England has stated that the general management approach for subtidal coarse sediment is to 'maintain in favourable condition' whilst the approach for the other site features is to 'recover to favourable condition'.

### **Maritime boundaries**

The South Dorset MCZ lies mostly within the 12 nautical mile limit with a small part extending further offshore.

### **MMO duties and powers**

The MMO has duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to exercise relevant functions in a manner which best furthers the conservation objectives of the MCZ.

The MMO has powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to introduce byelaws to manage fishing for the conservation of marine flora, fauna or habitats.

### **Summary of fishing activity within the site**

Analysis of fishing activity data, including vessel monitoring system (VMS) information indicates that the main fishing activities within the South Dorset MCZ are from trawling and dredging vessels, with a small number of midwater otter trawls, pots and Danish seines. Vessels which fish within the MCZ include those from the UK, Belgium, France, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway. The majority of fishing within the MCZ is from French and UK vessels. Further analysis of fishing activity within the site is available in MMO assessment.

### **MMO assessment**

The MMO assessment (South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone Marine Management Organisation (MMO) Fisheries Assessment), taking into account advice from Natural England and JNCC, is that bottom towed fishing anywhere in the MCZ is not compatible with the site achieving its conservation objectives.

### **Proposed management**

The proposed management measure in the draft byelaw is a prohibition on all bottom towed fishing, including demersal and semi-pelagic trawls, demersal seines and dredges throughout the MCZ, and a small buffer area around the MCZ.

This management measure will apply equally to fishing vessels from the UK and from any other country with fishing access rights.

A map showing the proposed management is provided at the end of this letter.



## Documents

All supporting documentation including the draft byelaw, associated regulatory triage assessment, the site's fisheries assessment and all relevant maps can be found [here](#) or via the link within the cover email.

## Questions to consider

Please provide us with any information you feel could be relevant to inform our decision for management at this site. In particular we are interested in understanding the following:

- Do you have any additional information about the location, condition or sensitivity of the designated features?
- Do you have information about the level or nature of fishing activity within the site?
  - What fishing gears are commonly used?
  - How regularly are each of these gears used?
  - What is the approximate size of each of the gears being used?
  - What species do each of these gears target?
  - What species are caught as bycatch by each of these gears?
  - What are the other environmental effects of these gears?
- How would the proposed management option affect you? (Please provide evidence of this impact if possible)
- What other effects will the proposed management option have?

## How to respond

Please respond no later than **28 March 2021**. You can respond by completing our online survey by visiting: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/mmo/formal-consultation-mmo-mpa-assessments/>

If you are not able to access the above survey, you can respond via the details below. Due to the current COVID-19 situation we are asking all stakeholders to use email rather than post if possible.

Copies of the byelaw may also be inspected at any MMO office. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, please contact MMO using the details below if you wish to inspect a copy of the draft byelaw at an MMO office.

By email: [conservation@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:conservation@marinemanagement.org.uk)

By telephone: 0300 123 1032

In writing:

South Dorset MCZ formal consultation  
Marine Conservation Team  
Marine Management Organisation  
Lancaster House



Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE4 7YH

## Next steps

We will use the information received during this formal consultation period, alongside other information (including analysis of academic literature, fishing logbook, vessel monitoring system data), to make a decision on the most appropriate fisheries management measure for South Dorset MCZ.

If an MMO byelaw is required, we will finalise the byelaw and submit it the Secretary of State for confirmation.

More information on the MMO byelaw making process can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/marine-conservation-byelaws](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/marine-conservation-byelaws)

If you wish to be alerted once this consultation is launched, or if you have any further questions or queries, please email [conservation@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:conservation@marinemanagement.org.uk) or call the MMO helpline on: 0300 123 1032.

Yours faithfully,

Jessica Duffill Telsnig  
Principal Marine Conservation Manager  
Marine Conservation Team  
Marine Management Organisation

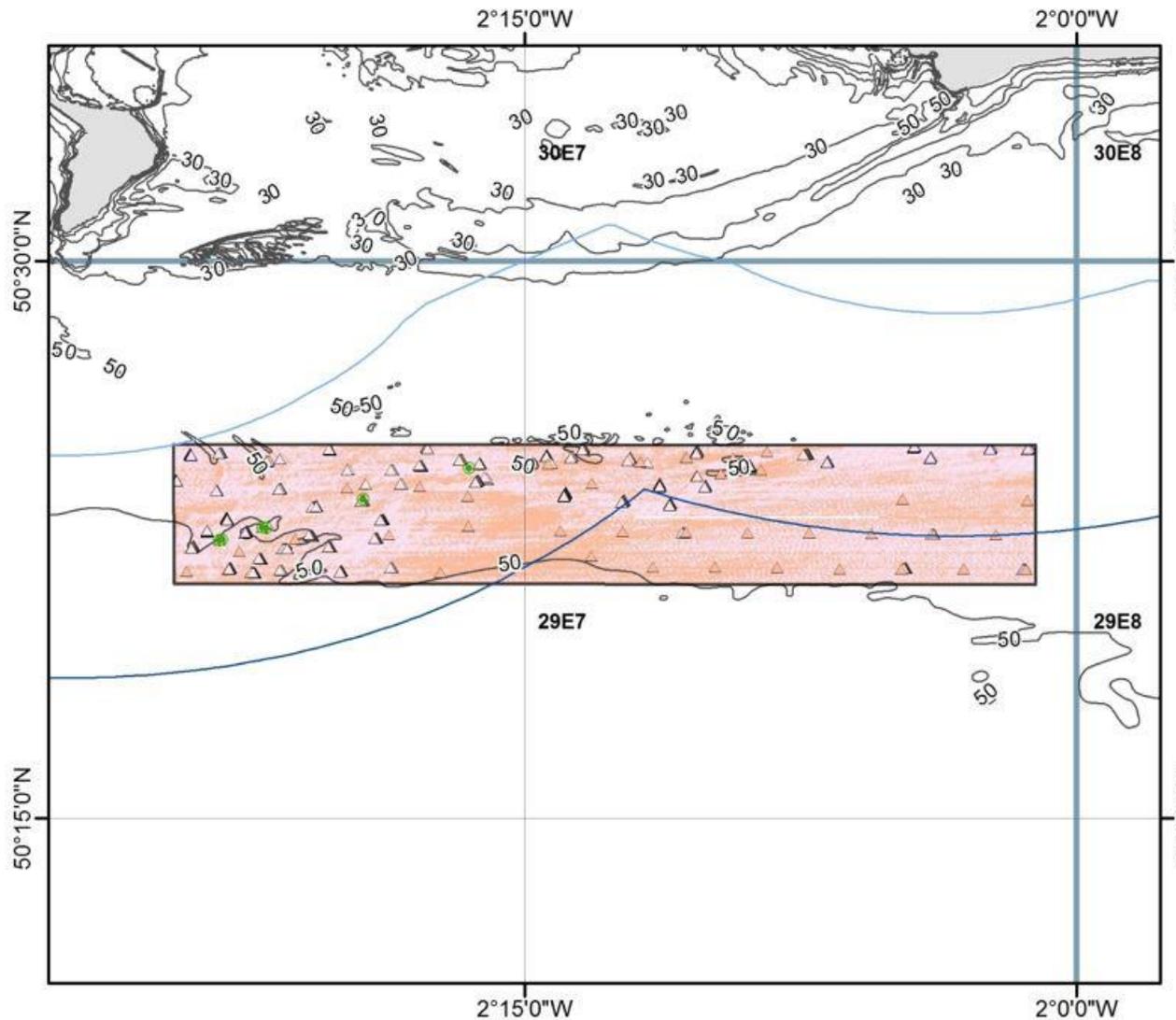




Marine  
Management  
Organisation

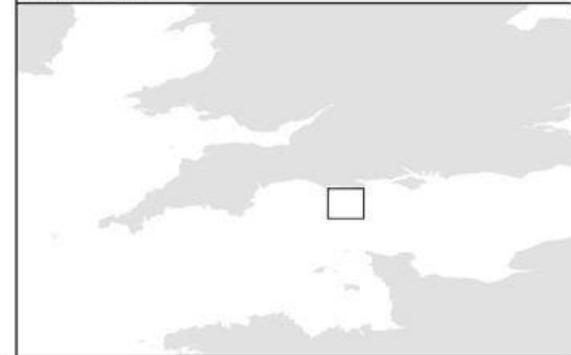
# South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone

## Designated features



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Bathymetry Contours (m) (UKHO)</li> <li>— 6 Nautical Mile Limit (1983) (UKHO)</li> <li>— 12 Nautical Mile Limit (1983) (UKHO)</li> <li>□ South Dorset MCZ</li> <li>□ ICES Statistical Rectangles</li> <li>● Habitat of Conservation Importance</li> <li>● Subtidal chalk (HOCI 20)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ High/moderate energy circalittoral rock (A4.1/A4.2)</li> <li>■ Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1)</li> <li>▲ High energy circalittoral rock (A4.1)</li> <li>▲ Moderate energy circalittoral rock (A4.2)</li> <li>▲ Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1)</li> </ul> |
|--|---|
- \*Benthic feature data clipped to MCZ

Date: 07/02/2020  
 Coordinate System: GCS ETRS 1989  
 Datum: ETRS 1989  
 Units: Degree

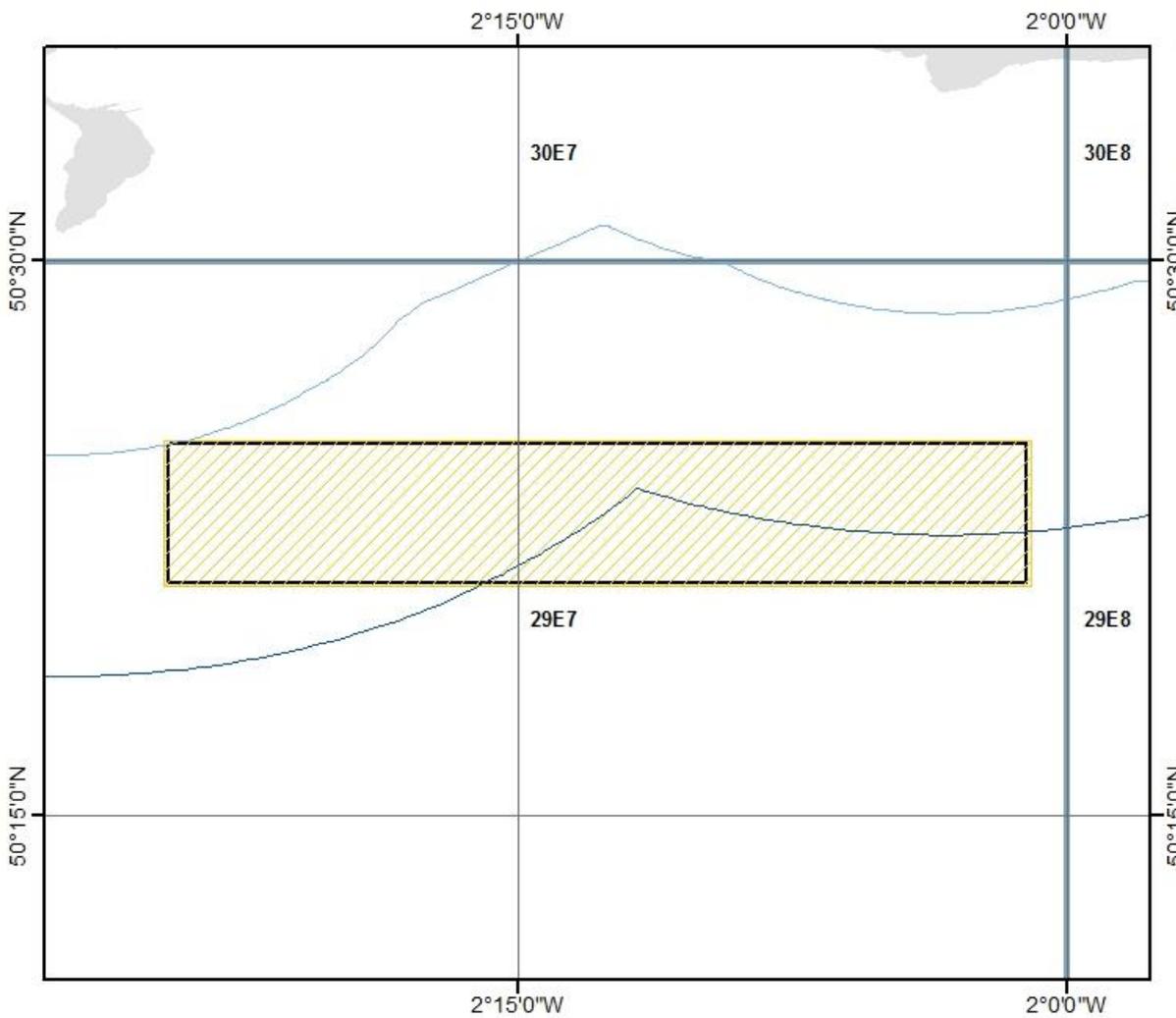


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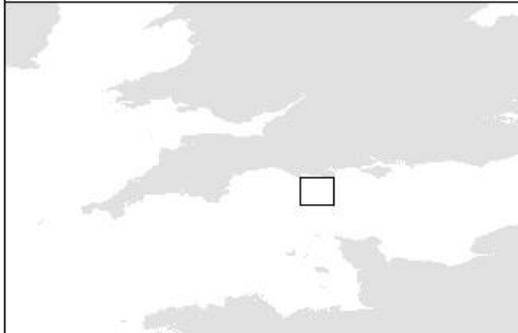
Marine  
Management  
Organisation

## The South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone (Specified Area) Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2021



- 6 Nautical Mile  
Limit (1983)  
(UKHO)
- 12 Nautical Mile  
Limit (1983)  
(UKHO)
- ICES Statistical  
Rectangles
- South Dorset  
MCZ
- Specified area  
(bottom towed  
fishing  
prohibited)

Date: 21/01/2021  
Coordinate System: GCS WGS 1984  
Datum: WGS 1984  
Units: Degree



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