

Assessing progress towards an ecologically coherent network of MPAs in UK waters

Summary

JNCC's work examines the collective protection that Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) afford to our seas, considering progress towards an ecologically coherent network of MPAs. JNCC have completed five MPA network assessments to date, three for Secretary of State waters to support the designation of English Marine Conservation Zones, one for Wales and one for Northern Ireland.

The assessments consider the progress made towards meeting national and international policy agreements, and assess the UK's MPA network against OSPAR MPA network guiding principles. JNCC's role in collating and mapping data for UK MPAs and marine habitats makes us ideally placed to undertake this work.

Work involved

JNCC's role involves managing detailed information on the designated features of MPAs, across countries and designation types in the UK; developing a methodology to assess progress towards an ecologically coherent MPA network; and undertaking assessments at different geographic scales and times for a range of protected habitats and species to review MPA network evolution.

Key Outcomes

MPA network assessment reports setting out key findings and informing JNCC's advice on the designation of national MPAs, plus a transferrable method for assessing whether an MPA network is ecologically coherent.

Future Work

JNCC uses the results of MPA network assessments to continue advising Defra and the Devolved Administrations on how the MPA network may be developed through further designations (if or where required).

Identified research priorities

Research is needed into how we can assess management effectiveness at the MPA network scale and how to evaluate the cumulative benefits to the wider marine environment in particular. JNCC actively seeks opportunities to collaborate with research bodies to fill these knowledge gaps.

Further information

www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=4549

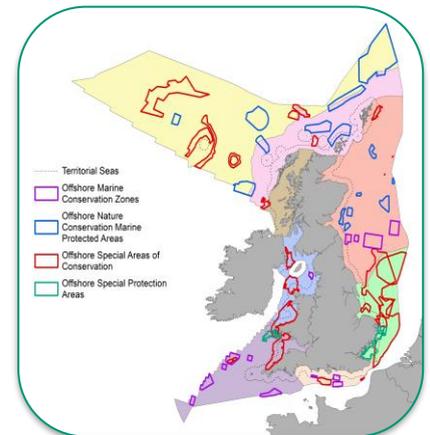
Country: UK

Main Driver: Legislative requirements and policy targets

Period of work: 2013 - Present

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Partnership: Defra, Welsh Government, DAERA, NE, NRW



MPAs in UK offshore waters (Oct 2017)



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