



**Tranche Three Marine Conservation Zone
Workshop - Day 1: Summary report of the
East of Start Point Area of Search
Breakout**

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

December 2016

JNCC Tranche Three Marine Conservation Zone Workshop: Summary report from Breakout session for the East of Start Point Area of Search

This report is an account of the discussions that took place during day 1 of the JNCC Tranche Three Marine Conservation Zone workshop in November 2016 on the Area of Search (AoS) in the Eastern Channel CP2 region. Further details about the workshop and the AoS can be found in the Workshop Guide¹ and Options Summary paper produced as supporting workshop materials².

During the sessions stakeholders were asked two key questions:

- Are there particular parts of the AoS that are of greater interest to you?
- Are there additional human activity or marine habitats and species datasets available in relation to the AoS that we have missed?

Summary

- NGOs are supportive of this AoS as it addresses a shortfall in the MPA network for Subtidal sand away from the coast, helping to build connectivity into the network. They would be concerned about any alternative proposals that would result in the shortfall being addressed by selecting areas closer to the coast/comprising of fragmented protection areas for the feature;
- The AoS is of very high interest to the UK fishing fleet and it is important to account for under 15m vessel activity in the area (working out of Brixham and coming from other areas in the UK) by using available resources such as FisherMap and 'Succorfish' data etc. This area is also of high interest to French, Dutch, Irish and Belgian fleets; and
- Alternative locations to address the shortfall for Subtidal sand in the region were proposed (largely inshore) and are being investigated for their potential to address the shortfall in the network.

Specific interests or concerns

- The fisheries industry representatives (both UK and non-UK) are very concerned with this area going forward due to the heavy cost it could present to the fishing industry;
- Furthermore, the area is very important for smaller vessels (under 15 m) who undertake seasonal fishing activity for lemon sole, cuttlefish and squid;
- UNESCO representative mentioned the fact that there are many wrecks in the AoS and JNCC should liaise with archaeology organisations namely with Historic England to raise awareness of this proposal;
- An independent participant mentioned the existence of a license to sink vessels for recreational diving near this area;

¹ Workshop Guide for the JNCC Tranche Three Marine Conservation Zone Workshop 2016. Available online at http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/MCZWS02_T3_Workshop_Guide_Final.pdf

² Option Summary for the East of Start Point Area of Search in the Eastern Channel. Available online at http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/MCZWS04_EasternChannel1_OptionsSummary_vFinal.pdf

- MoD mentioned that there is navy activity in the area but it is mainly surface activity with at sea ship-to-ship transfer activities; and
- MCS would like to know about the presence of sandeels in the site;

Comments regarding data

- There is a high voltage cable likely to be put in place that intersects with this Area of Search (France, Alderney Britain) which was not represented in JNCC analyses;
- The Crown Estate would like to have access to shape files to check on the presence of cables that are not represented in the present JNCC files;
- There was no information on activity from vessels smaller than 15m; JNCC should look at data provided by FisherMap and Succorfish;
- French, Dutch and Belgian fisheries industry representatives did not have enough time to request fisheries data analyses for their countries;
- French, Dutch and Belgian fisheries industry representatives have requested access to shape files with information on the AoS;
- Fisheries representatives suggest JNCC use ping data to delineate boundaries with more precision and to exclude areas heavily fished;
- Fisheries representatives shared a GPS plotter image (Annex A - Figure 1 and 2) as an example of areas fished by the smaller fishing vessels (lemon sole, cuttlefish and squid fisheries);
- MoD offered to work with JNCC to identify specific naval activities taking place in the AoS;
- Check offshore wind proposals in the area with Crown Estate as well as location of disused disposal site;
- RSPB mentioned that the SeaWatch project takes place in/near the AoS and they might have information/data to share; and
- MMO mentioned that Natural England has information on French, Belgian and Irish inshore historic fishing rights in the area and those should be taken into consideration.

Alternative AoS options

During the breakout sessions, any suggestions for movement or modification of the AoS were recorded and presented during the plenary session to be considered and for further information to be gathered regarding these. There were some broad comments made on the inshore areas around the Isle of Wight, Start Point Bay, west of Portland and an area in the vicinity of Weymouth.

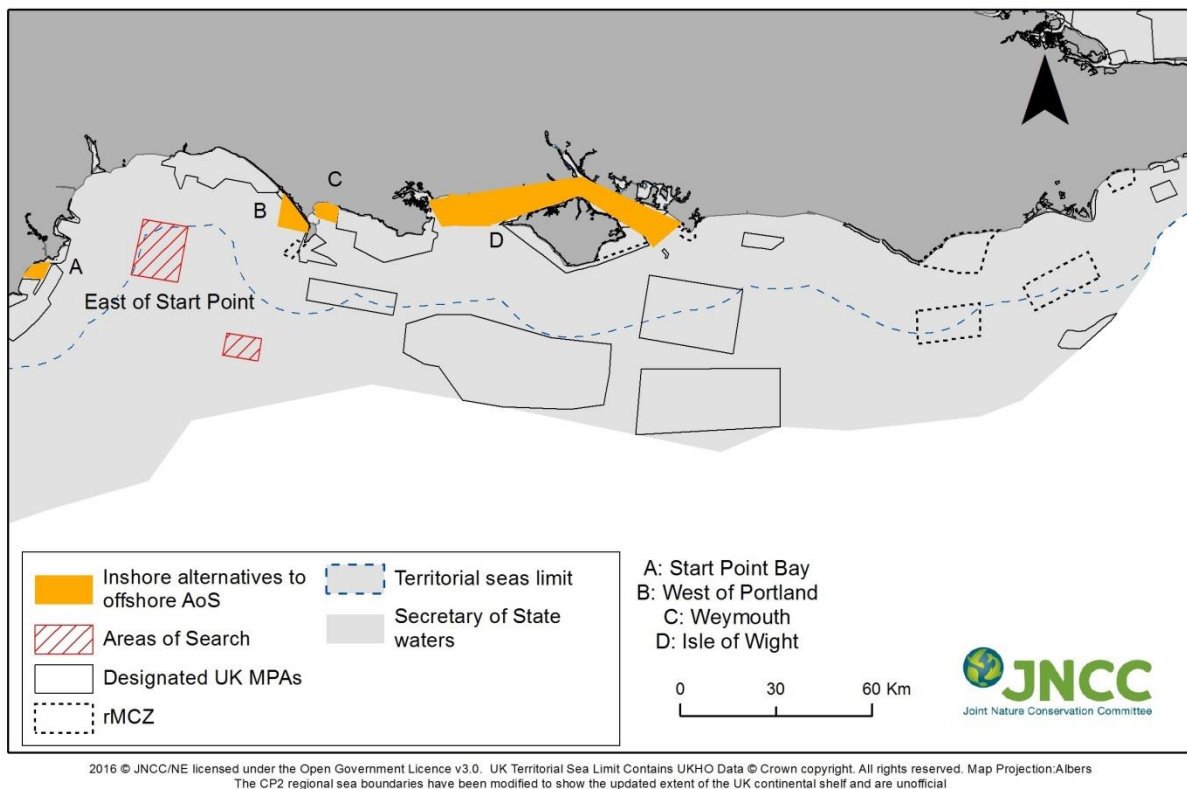


Figure 1: Alternatives to the East of Start Point Area of Search in the Eastern Channel region as proposed during discussions at the Tranche Three MCZ workshop.

Area A: Start Point Bay.

Proposed by: Fisheries representatives

Any other comments regarding this area: This area was proposed as it has Subtidal sand coverage and has lower fishing intensity activity. There might be other small vessel fisheries occurring with no representatives at the workshop. Non-UK fisheries representatives supported this area.

Area B: West of Portland.

Proposed by: Fisheries representatives

Any other comments regarding this area: This area was proposed as it has Subtidal sand coverage and has lower fishing intensity activity. Non-UK fisheries representatives supported this area.

Area C: Weymouth

Proposed by: Fisheries representatives

Any other comments regarding this area: This area was proposed as it has Subtidal sand coverage and has lower fishing intensity activity (no trawling). This is an area of high marine traffic intensity. Vessel mooring and cargo transfer might be intense. Non-UK fisheries representatives supported this area.

Area D: Isle of Wight

Proposed by: Fisheries representatives

Any other comments regarding this area: This area was proposed as it has Subtidal sand coverage and has lower fishing intensity activity (no trawling). This is an area of high marine traffic intensity. Vessel mooring and cargo transfer might be intense. It was mentioned that there is a high ecological interest in the area for other species namely birds. Non-UK fisheries representatives supported this area.

JNCC have followed up on any alternative suggestions to Areas of Search presented at the workshop. Details of alternative proposals across the five CP2 regions made at the workshop can be found in the separate document specifically looking at the alternative proposals which will be published alongside this report.

General stakeholder comments

- Fisheries displacement was raised as a potential issue by most of participants. Some of the problems raised concern fisherman health and safety as well as sustainability of the surrounding areas;
- The French fishing industry highlighted that it is necessary to take into account the fishing activity of UK and non-UK vessels into decisions;
- NGOs are concerned about alternative areas suggested during the workshop as it will result in a highly fragmented network and lower connectivity for Subtidal sand in the region. It may also create an unbalanced conservation effort between inshore and offshore areas;
- It was mentioned that there might be quite a lot of ship mooring activity for cargo transfer in the alternatives areas suggested during this workshop as they are at the vicinity/access areas for ports;
- The AoS is almost the double of what is needed to reach minimum adequacy targets for Subtidal sand in the region; and
- NGOs were positively impressed with the level of effort JNCC put on developing the AoS and presentation materials.

Annex A – Information material provided by small vessel fishermen participant.

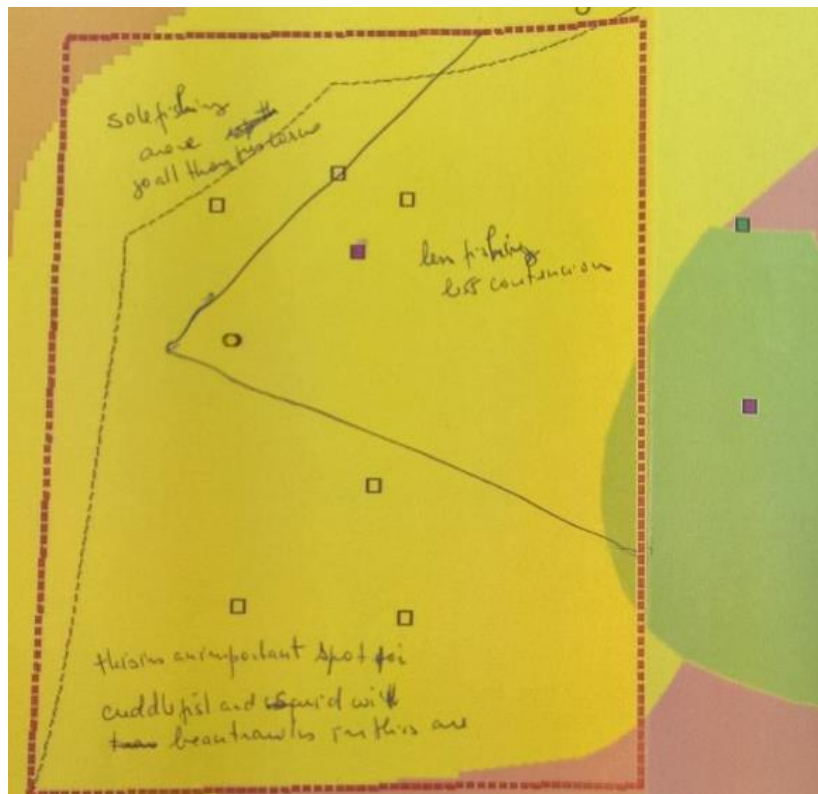


Figure 1. Image of one fisherman’s review of fishing activities in the area. The triangular area to the north-west of the Area of Search is considered the least contentious component. Other areas are very important seasonally for sole fishing (north-west) and cuttlefish/squid year round to the South. You can see this clearly from the plotter data below in Figure 2.

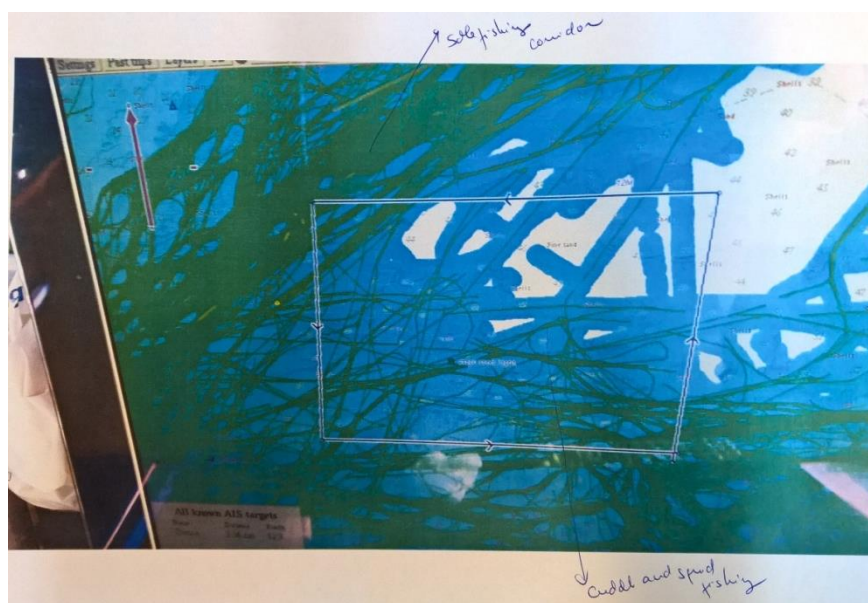


Figure 2. Plotter data from one vessel. Note this trend is largely the same when scaled up to multiple under 15 m vessels but keep in mind this is just one vessels activity.