

Impact Assessment materials in support of the Regional Marine Conservation Zone Projects' Recommendations

13 July 2012

Finding Sanctuary, Irish Seas Conservation Zones, Net Gain and Balanced Seas



Acknowledgements

The main body of this impact assessment has been written and edited by the regional MCZ project teams. The lead contributors (in alphabetical order) were:

Dominic Chapman (Net Gain), Rupert Haines (Finding Sanctuary), Francesca Moore (Irish Seas Conservation Zones) and Joanna Redhead (Net Gain).

Additional contributors of content, analysis, and charts from the regional MCZ project teams (in alphabetical order) were:

Anna Gibson, Rebecca Herdson, James Lawson, Shaun Lewin, Bernard Morizet, Amy Pryor, Rachael Somerville, Greg Vaughan, Melanie Vaughan, Sue Wells, Greg Whitfield, Maire Williams.

The evidence used to compile this impact assessment has been gathered from Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, marine agencies, public authorities, research institutes, environmental organisations, industries, developers and individual stakeholders throughout the UK and Europe. The regional MCZ project teams are grateful for all contributions of data, text, and expertise provided. Particular appreciation is extended to the MCZ Project Regional Stakeholder Groups, Named Consultative Stakeholders, reviewers within Defra and contracted by Defra, within Department of Energy and Climate Change, Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, for feedback and comments provided on earlier draft material. The regional MCZ project teams also appreciated the advice that economists in Defra and Natural England provided on technical aspects of carrying out the analysis.

Copy editing: Accuracy Matters.

Contents

Each item in the list of contents is provided in a separate document.

Where headings are written in italics, the subsequent headings (not written in italics) are for the individual documents – there is no document for any heading written in italics.

The blue text provides a brief description of the IA Summary, Evidence Base and each Annex.

IA Summary (written in the template supplied by the government)

A very brief and succinct summary of why MCZs are needed and the impacts of the suite of sites.

Evidence Base

This provides a clearer, more detailed summary of the following in the MCZ project area:

- Why MCZs are needed;*
- Activities in each sector in the absence of MCZs (this is provided only for activities that may be impacted by MCZs). This is known as the 'baseline' in the IA.*
- The costs of the impact of the suite of MCZs on each sector. These costs are assessed relative to the baseline.*
- The benefits, which are assessed in terms of the impact on ecosystem services.*

Annexes:

These provide further detail on the assessment of impacts in the Evidence Base and supporting information. Broadly, Annexes A – E provide background information and Annexes F – M provide information that concerns the assessment of impacts in the IA.

A. Abbreviations and acronyms

B. Recommended MCZ features:

This is a summary of the features listed in the site recommendations for each rMCZ.

- B1. Balanced Seas**
- B2. Finding Sanctuary**
- B3. Irish Seas Conservation Zones**
- B4. Net Gain**

C. Summary of activities in or near each rMCZ:

These tables enable the reader to quickly identify which rMCZs an activity occurs in and whether it will be impacted by the rMCZ. Readers can use this to (a) check that the regional MCZ projects have identified that their sector operates in an rMCZ and (b) identify which rMCZs may impact on a specific sector. The reader can use these tables to identify which rMCZs may be of interest, and can find further information on the impacts of those rMCZs in Annex I. Annex I provides assessments of the site-specific impacts of each rMCZ.

- C1. Balanced Seas**
- C2. Finding Sanctuary**
- C3. Irish Seas Conservation Zones**
- C4. Net Gain**

D. Description at a national scale of sectors impacted on by MCZs

This provides context for the assessment provided in the IA

E. Existing local fisheries and recreation management:

This lists all existing fisheries byelaws and other local fisheries management in each regional MCZ project area. Existing local fisheries management that is particularly relevant to the management that may be needed for a specific rMCZ is identified in Table 2 for Commercial fisheries in Annex I (and not in this annex).

For two of the project areas, Annex E also lists existing local management of recreational activities that is particularly relevant to the management that may be needed for rMCZs.

- E1. Existing local fisheries and recreation management (Balanced Seas)
- E2. Existing local fisheries management (Finding Sanctuary)
- E3. Existing local fisheries and recreation management (Irish Seas Conservation Zones)
- E4. Existing local fisheries management (Net Gain)

F. Regional summary:

This provides a summary of the following for each regional MCZ project area: the environment, the level and nature of activities in the absence of MCZs (focussed on activities that will be impacted on by MCZs) and impacts of rMCZs for each sector. Most of these summaries were used to write the summaries of the baseline and impacts for the suite of sites that are provided in the Evidence Base. Regional summaries are not provided for sectors for which impacts are assessed only at the scale of the entire suite of sites or for sectors that are not impacted on by rMCZs.

- F1. Balanced Seas
- F2. Finding Sanctuary
- F3. Irish Seas Conservation Zones
- F4. Net Gain

G. Advice on the impacts of MCZs on marine licence proposals

Advice provided by JNCC and Natural England that informs assumptions used in the IA.

H. Approach for assessing impacts:

Annex H1 provides important information on the general assumptions and approach adopted for the IA. The other sections of Annex H describe how impacts have been assessed for each sector. This includes details of the assumptions made and approach adopted in assessing the impact of MCZs on the sector.

- H1. General assumptions and approach
- H2. Approach for assessing impacts on aggregate extraction
- H3. Approach for assessing impacts on aquaculture
- H4. Approach for assessing impacts on archaeological heritage
- H5. Approach for assessing benefits
- H6. Approach for assessing impacts on cables (interconnectors and telecom cables)
- H7. Approach for assessing impacts on commercial fisheries
- H8. Approach for assessing impacts on flood and coastal erosion risk management (coastal defence)
- H9. Approach for assessing costs of management measure implementation, enforcement and surveillance
- H10. Approach for assessing impacts on national defence
- H11. Approach for assessing impacts on oil and gas related activities
- H12. Approach for assessing impacts on ports, harbours, shipping and disposal sites
- H13. Approach for assessing impacts on recreation
- H14. Approach for assessing impacts on renewable energy

I. Impacts of individual rMCZs:

This presents the impacts (costs and benefits) that can be assessed at a site-specific level for each rMCZ. Note that costs for some sectors cannot be assessed at a site-specific level. These are identified in the Table 2 of each rMCZ.

Costs that are assessed only for the entire suite of sites (not individual sites) are summarised in the Evidence Base. Summaries of impacts that arise as a result of more than one site, but not the entire suite, are provided in Annex J.

- I1. Balanced Seas
- I2. Finding Sanctuary
- I3. Irish Seas Conservation Zones
- I4. Net Gain

J. Impacts that arise from more than one rMCZ:

J1. Additional concerns about impacts of rMCZs on aggregate extraction, oil and gas-related activities, renewable energy and ports, harbours and shipping:

This summarises additional concerns about impacts of MCZs that have been raised by operators and the bodies that represent them. These concerns are presented in the IA but have not been used to calculate the costs for the IA because it is anticipated that it is unlikely that they will arise.

- J1a. Additional concerns raised by the British Marine Aggregate Producers Association and The Crown Estate about the impacts of rMCZs on aggregate extraction
- J1b. Additional concerns raised by Oil and Gas UK and the Carbon Capture and Storage Association about the impacts of rMCZs
- J1c. Additional concerns raised by renewable energy developers about the impacts of rMCZs
- J1d. Additional concerns raised by port and harbour operators about impacts of rMCZs

J2. Costs of MCZ verification, baseline setting and monitoring surveys

Description of the approach adopted by JNCC and Natural England in estimating the costs of verifying MCZ features, setting baselines for the condition of features and monitoring the condition of features. This annex also provides details of the estimates of the costs.

J3. Qualitative impacts on commercial fisheries that arise from more than one rMCZ:

This presents qualitative impacts on commercial fisheries that arise from more than one rMCZ. Impacts of individual sites are presented in Annex I. Differences in the information provided on each regional MCZ project area in Annex J3 arise from differences in the information on impacts on fisheries that was provided by stakeholders. For example, in the Finding Sanctuary project area, most information provided by stakeholders was on the impacts of individual sites (and so is presented in Annex I), whereas in the Net Gain project area stakeholders preferred to discuss the impacts of the regional suite of rMCZs (which is presented here in Annex J3d).

- J3a. Qualitative impacts on commercial fisheries arising from the suite of rMCZs in the Balanced Seas Project Area
- J3b. Qualitative impacts on commercial fisheries arising from groups of rMCZs in the Finding Sanctuary Project Area.
- J3c. Qualitative impacts on commercial fisheries arising from groups of rMCZs in the Irish Seas Conservation Zones Project Area
- J3d. Qualitative impacts on commercial fisheries arising from the suite of rMCZs in the Net Gain Project Area

K. Best estimates of costs and benefits for each rMCZ and each regional MCZ project area

Table that summarises the best estimates of the impact of each site.

L. Benefits of MCZs: a review of the evidence

Review of the evidence of the benefits of the suite of sites and of the evidence that supports the assessment of site-specific benefits.

M. Stakeholder engagement in the Impact Assessment process

Summary of the stakeholder engagement that took place as part of the IA process.

N. Calculation of costs of impacts of rMCZs on each sector and total combined costs:

Spreadsheets used to calculate all the costs. These are included to provide full transparency in how the calculations have been carried out.

N1. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on aggregate extraction

N2. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on aquaculture

N3. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on cables (interconnectors and telecom cables)

N4. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on commercial fisheries (UK)

N5. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on commercial fisheries (French)

N6. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on flood and coastal erosion risk management (coastal defence)

N7. Suggested management measures for rMCZs and calculation of their costs

N8. Calculation of costs of MCZ verification, baseline setting and monitoring surveys

N9. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on national defence

N10. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on oil and gas related activities

N11. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on ports, harbours, shipping and disposal sites

N12. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on recreation

N13. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on renewable energy

N14. Calculation of impacts of rMCZs on all sectors

O. Quality Assurance of the IA material.

Summary of the processes employed to provide quality assurance for the IA material.