

East of Haig Fras Marine Conservation Zone

Where is this site?

East of Haig Fras MCZ is an offshore site located in the Celtic Sea. The site lies approximately 67 km north of Land's End in Cornwall and covers an area of around 400 km². The site lies in waters between 50 and 100 metres in depth, with small areas in the western part of the site dipping below 100 metres deep.

Why is this site important?

East of Haig Fras MCZ protects a range of seabed habitats, including subtidal sediments and rock. This site makes an important contribution to the marine protected areas network by conserving habitats that are representative of our seas.



What does this Marine Conservation Zone protect?

This site protects three different habitat types which are found in varying proportions throughout the site. Smaller areas of exposed rock are found within the area but much of the seabed is comprised of sediments such as muddy gravelly sand or mixtures of cobbles and pebbles. The sediments occur in a complex mosaic which create a range of different habitats each capable of supporting a variety of marine wildlife. The depth of water across the site means the amount of light reaching the seabed can be restricted, resulting in limited amounts of plant life and a seabed dominated by animal communities

Surveys of the sediment seabed have found that the communities that live here are diverse, ranging from worms and molluscs to sponges, starfish and anemones. Additionally, the site is also known to support numerous fish species such as sculdfish (*Arnoglossus laterna*). The seabed habitats and the associated species found within the site require protection as they are particularly vulnerable to damage from certain activities.



Features	General management approach
Subtidal sand	Recover to favourable condition
Subtidal coarse sediment/mixed sediments mosaic	Recover to favourable condition
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition

Who will manage Marine Conservation Zones?

Many activities within the marine environment are regulated through marine licences. More information regarding the marine licensing process in relation to MCZs can be found on the MMO website www.marinemanagement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm

Other activities are regulated through different mechanisms. For example fishing activities are managed through European legislation, national statutory instruments, byelaws and self-imposed voluntary agreements. Similar arrangements are in place to manage the range of activities that may impact MCZs including pollution, coastal development and recreation.

Management of sites is currently being prioritised nationally according to the potential or actual adverse impacts of activities on the features designated in relation to fishing activities. This prioritisation will be further refined at a local level taking into account relevant information and will guide regulators to those sites which may need protection before others.

Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the features. In cases where there is a high risk to designated features being damaged emergency measures may be put in place to ensure the protection of vulnerable habitats and species.

What happens now this site has been designated?

The site specific information below provides an overview of which activities may be affected by the designation of the MCZ and the current management measures. As with all management measures, they may, of course, be subject to change in the light of new evidence becoming available.

Current activities identified at this site which could be affected include the UK and EU commercial fisheries sector (predominately mobile gear).

As this site is offshore (over 12nm from the coastline) management measures will need to be proposed and agreed through the European Commission in accordance with the Common Fisheries Policy, applying to UK and non-UK fishing vessels alike. Defra will coordinate input from the MMO and JNCC before formally submitting proposals to the EC. The MMO will be the lead authority regarding implementation and compliance of those measures. All current relevant national and EU fisheries legislation apply to this site such as Hake Recovery and Western Waters control measures.

Further information is available at

www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/index.htm

Where can I find out further information?

An interactive map showing this MCZs and other marine protected areas is available at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5201>

Additional information about this site and other MCZs is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/protecting-and-sustainably-using-the-marine-environment>

and within JNCC's advice available at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6460>



Annex: Management

Lead organisation	Activities
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries (0-6nm) including commercial fisheries and recreational fishing activities such as sea angling <p>For further information visit www.association-ifca.org.uk</p>
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries (management) (6-12nm) Fisheries (enforcement) national and EU legislation Licensable activities such as deposit and removal activities below mean high water springs, including subsea cables (up to 12nm), construction (including renewables <100MW, ports and coastal protection), dredging and disposal Harbour Orders and Harbour Empowerment Orders Section 36 and safety zone consents Enforcement of licensable activity and other consents (including deemed marine licences) Development of marine plans integrating the social requirements, economic potential and environmental priorities of marine plan areas Activities requiring a wildlife licence <p>For further information visit www.marinemangement.org.uk/fisheries or www.marinemangement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm</p>
Environment Agency (EA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries management for migratory and fresh water fish Coastal protection and flood management Water quality Permitted discharges from terrestrial sources <p>For further information visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk/default.aspx</p>
Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oil and Gas related activities Renewable energy related activities <p>For further information visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change</p>
Harbour Authorities and local planning authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harbour authorities have management responsibilities for the port and coastal waters within their jurisdiction Local authorities have role to manage, regulate and facilitate activities at the coast. These include management of coastal recreation, tourism, economic regeneration, flood protection, spatial planning and coastal zone and estuary management, <p>For further information contact your local authority or IFCA</p>
Department for Transport (DfT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for shipping, harbours, ship pollution and offshore safety <p>For further information visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport</p>
Natural England (NE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public access <p>For further information visit www.naturalengland.org.uk/</p>