



Different types of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Scotland

This leaflet explains the different types of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) within Scottish seas. It summarises the purpose of each type of MPA, the associated legislation, the roles and responsibilities of relevant organisations, and provides links to further reading sources.

The Scottish MPA Network

The term 'MPA' is used for different types of protected areas in the marine environment. Scotland (along with the rest of the UK) has a number of MPAs.

The following types of MPAs make up the Scottish MPA network...

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- Nature Conservation MPAs
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- Ramsar sites

Other measures contribute to the protection of the marine environment. Further information is available online, including: *Fisheries restrictions*¹ established for nature conservation purposes and designated *seal haul-out*² sites.

Roles of different organisations

Marine Scotland (MS) is part of the Scottish Government and is responsible for everything marine and fisheries related in Scotland. MS's aim is that a network of well-managed MPAs will, alongside other management measures, support our future sustainable use of the seas around Scotland.

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) offers conservation advice on MPAs within Scottish territorial waters (i.e. out to 12 nautical miles (nm)) to MS and Scottish Ministers; decisions are then taken by Ministers (see SNH's additional roles for SSSIs in Table 1).

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) has an overall UK coordinating role relating to conservation advice on MPAs and offers specific advice on sites in offshore waters (i.e. between 12 and 200nm).

Points to note

This leaflet aims to provide a summary of information about MPAs. Therefore the information provided should not be taken as a legal interpretation.

SSSIs and Ramsar sites are designated on land and the foreshore only. Therefore JNCC is not involved, except as part of their overall UK coordination role for conservation advice on all MPAs.

Further information about MPAs

Marine Scotland

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/marine-environment/Conservationstrategy

Scottish Natural Heritage

www.snh.gov.uk/mpanetwork

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/marineprotectedsites

Published by Scottish Natural Heritage

For more information visit www.snh.gov.uk or email enquiries@snh.gov.uk



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

1 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/Sea-Fisheries/InshoreFisheries>
2 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/marine-environment/species/19887/20814/haulouts>

Table 1: Summary of the who, what and why for each type of MPA

| Type of MPA | What does it protect? | Legislation / Agreement | Lead organisation | SNH and JNCC roles |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SAC | <p>Protection of marine species and habitats agreed at a European level to contribute to the conservation of Europe's biodiversity.</p> <p>The habitats and species are listed in Annex I and Annex II of Council Directive 92/43/EEC.</p> | <p>International</p> <p>Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (as amended) (commonly known as the Habitats Directive) is transposed into law in Scotland by The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) (includes territorial waters) and The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (offshore waters).</p> | Marine Scotland | <p>SNH lead in developing and providing scientific advice to Scottish Ministers on the selection of sites within Scottish territorial waters (out to 12nm). SNH work in partnership with JNCC, MS and Historic Scotland. SNH also produce communication materials and directly engage with the public and marine users to support the delivery of the MPA network consultation process for Scottish territorial waters.</p> <p>Once sites are proposed and / or designated, SNH provides advice on the sensitivities of the habitats and species to MS. When providing this advice for MPAs in Scottish territorial waters SNH will take into account the objectives set for each site. Scottish Ministers then decide what management is required to maintain the interest of the MPA.</p> <p>There is a legal requirement to consult SNH and have regard to our advice when considering plans / projects likely to have a significant effect on these types of MPAs.</p> |
| SPA | <p>Protection for bird species wholly dependent on the marine environment (agreed at a European level) to contribute to ensuring their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution within Europe.</p> <p>The species include those listed in Annex I of Directive 2009/147/EC and all migratory bird species.</p> | <p>International</p> <p>Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds (commonly known as the Birds Directive) is transposed into law in Scotland largely through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004) and also by elements of the Habitats Regulations.</p> | Marine Scotland | <p>JNCC fulfil the same role as SNH for these types of MPAs in offshore waters.</p> |
| Nature Conservation MPA | <p>Conserves marine flora or fauna, habitats or geological or geomorphological interests and protection of these features can be used to complement other protection measures including SACs, SPAs and SSSIs.</p> | <p>National</p> <p>Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (territorial waters)</p> <p>UK Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (offshore waters)</p> <p>MPAs have been identified primarily using OSPAR principles.</p> | Marine Scotland | <p>JNCC fulfil the same role as SNH for these types of MPAs in offshore waters.</p> |
| SSSI | <p>Conservation of areas of land and water (to mean low water spring tide level) that represent Scotland's diversity of plants, animals, habitats, rocks and landforms.</p> | <p>National</p> <p>Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004</p> | Scottish Natural Heritage | <p>SNH identifies, designates and de-notifies sites. We establish management processes and grant permission for operations requiring consent that are proposed to be carried out within sites. We also respond to consultations from regulatory authorities regarding operation applications within sites.</p> |
| Ramsar | <p>To promote the conservation and wise-use of wetlands of international importance and their resources.</p> | <p>International Convention</p> <p>1971 Convention of Wetlands of International Importance</p> | Marine Scotland | <p>SNH provides advice on proposed sites for selection, and management issues, to MS.</p> <p>Most Ramsar sites in Scotland are also either SPAs or SACs, and many are also SSSIs. Therefore, they benefit from measures required to protect and enhance Natura (SACs and SPAs) and SSSI sites that overlap them.</p> |