Report of the Task and Finish Team on MCZs in Wales
SUMMARY

Background
A range of marine habitats and species are currently protected by 125 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that cover 36% of Welsh seas. The Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) (MaCAA) gave the Welsh Ministers powers to designate a new kind of MPA known as Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). MCZs enable the protection of other nationally important marine features not covered by existing designations to make the MPA network ecologically coherent.

The Welsh Government is obliged to contribute to a coherent and well-managed network of MPAs by 2016 to comply with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the requirements of the MaCAA.

2012 MCZ consultation
Following advice from Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) the Welsh Government decided that MCZs should be used to supplement the existing network of sites with a small number of highly protected sites in order to fulfil its network obligations.

In 2012 the Welsh Government consulted on 10 potential options for MCZs to gather information before determining how to take forward MCZs in Wales.

The intention was that if any of the proposed sites were designated they would receive a high level of protection where all the habitats and species within the zones would be protected from all extractive, depositional, damaging or disturbing activities.

The consultation generated 6,712 responses expressing highly divergent and strongly held views. The most contentious element was the proposed high level of protection; many were in favour of the principle of having such sites but coastal communities and businesses thought they would create unacceptable socio-economic impacts with little evidence of the benefits.

Reviewing the Approach to MCZs
The Welsh Government set up a Task and Finish Team to review the consultation feedback and the approaches taken by the other UK administrations before recommending how MCZs should be progressed in Wales as part of the wider MPA network. The Task and Finish Team was guided and supported by a Stakeholder Focus Group that represented all the major marine users. This note summarises the findings of the Task and Finish Team review.
Highly Protected Sites
Our understanding of the potential role and benefits of sites with a high level of protection within the wider network is still developing. In the consultation response there were strong opinions expressed both for and against the principle of having such sites. A comprehensive review of sites with a high level of protection is needed to address some of the questions raised in the consultation and provide a clearer understanding of their role and benefits.

If a review confirms that sites with a high level of protection would be beneficial, or concludes that experimental sites could help determine the benefits, the way sites are implemented should be carefully considered and undertaken with the involvement of local communities.

To avoid continued uncertainty amongst coastal communities all the site options presented in the 2012 consultation should be formally withdrawn.

Proposed Way Forward with MCZs
Following the 2012 consultation, we now have a better understanding of how the network should function and the scale at which it should be assessed. The UK administrations have agreed five principles against which the network contribution should be assessed (Appendix 1) e.g. Connectivity: ensure the network is well distributed and takes account of linkages between ecosystems.

Our current network contribution should be compared against these agreed principles. This will quantify our current contribution and determine if there are any shortfalls in the protection of species and habitats that Wales can address with MCZs.

The Task and Finish team has outlined a process for identifying and selecting MCZs in which both stakeholders and technical experts will contribute (Appendix 2). A risk-based approach to site management is proposed where site features are protected from activities that may have an adverse impact.

Management of MPAs
Reviewing the effectiveness of the existing MPAs in Welsh seas to ensure they are well managed, valued by the Welsh public and contribute to improvement of the marine environment should also be seen as a priority.

Integration with the Wider Marine Programme
The Welsh Government should integrate its marine strategies and plans and consider co-ordinating their delivery in a combined action plan. As part of this approach the Welsh Government should establish new ways of working that
incorporates stakeholders to support effective policy making and delivery at a community level.

MCZ TASK AND FINISH TEAM REVIEW

Background
To help deliver the vision for ‘clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse seas’ the Welsh Government and the other UK administrations are committed to contributing towards a network of well managed marine protected areas (MPAs)¹.

The Welsh Government’s contribution towards the network will be made up of European Marine Sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas² (SPAs)), intertidal Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ramsar sites, the Marine Nature Reserve at Skomer³ plus any MCZs identified as necessary to meet the needs of the network. There are currently 125 MPAs in Wales, covering approximately 75% of the coastline and 36% of the territorial seas⁴.

MCZs are a new type of MPA introduced by Part V of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA). They are for the conservation of marine habitats and species, geology and geomorphology. This legislation provides the Welsh Government with the opportunity to protect nationally important habitats and species not covered in the network in existing MPAs.

Previous approach to MCZs in Wales
In preparation for the use of the powers under MaCAA and following advice from the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) the Welsh Government took the decision to consult on using the new MCZ power to supplement the already extensive series of MPAs in Welsh seas.

It was thought this could best be achieved with a small number of highly protected marine areas where the whole site would be protected including the water column, sea bed, all the habitats and the species they support. The view was that such sites could play an important part in the network of MPAs by enhancing recovery, resilience and our understanding of how natural marine ecosystems function. At the same time these sites would increase the range of habitats and species represented

² The Welsh Government is working with Natural Resources Wales to complete the seaward extension of 3 seabird colonies at Grassholm SPA, Skokholm & Skomer SPA and the Aberdaron Coast & Bardsey Island SPA. In addition the need for wholly marine SPAs is being considered at a UK level.
³ MNR will become an MCZ upon commencement of Part V of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.
⁴ Report to the National Assembly for Wales on Marine Protected Areas in Wales December 2012
within the Welsh series of MPAs. The intention was that these sites would fulfil Wales’s contribution to the wider MPA network along with the existing MPAs.

The highly protected approach was set out in the Welsh Government’s draft strategy for all marine protected areas in Wales, ‘Protecting Welsh Seas’, which was consulted on during September to December 2009. In 2010 a project was established to identify three to four sites and this was the basis of a public consultation in 2012 which sought to gather more information on 10 potential site options to help identify which might be suitable for further local consultation.

The consultation generated 6,712 responses which expressed highly divergent and strongly held views. Taking into account the response to the 2012 consultation, the then Environment Minister announced on 5 November 2012 that there would be further work to look at the approach to MCZs in Wales. A multi-disciplinary Task and Finish Team, supported by a Stakeholder Focus Group, was established to take this work forward and to report with recommendations in April 2013. The remit and membership of both groups are provided in Appendix 3.

**Task and Finish Team**
The role of the Task and Finish Team was to consider and advise how the Welsh Ministers should take forward MCZs in Wales in order to contribute to the wider network of MPAs (Appendix 1). The main areas the team considered were the:

- Response from the 2012 MCZ consultation in Wales
- Legal obligations to create MCZs and contribute to a network of MPAs
- Approach to designating MCZs in the other UK administrations

**Response to the 2012 MCZ consultation**
The most contentious element of the consultation was the high level of protection planned at all sites, with opinions both for and against.

- Many supported the principle of highly protected MCZs but questions were raised over the level of evidence for the need for such sites, their role and benefits to the marine environment.
- Many local communities and businesses thought there would be unacceptable socio-economic impacts from the site options presented. They thought that:
  - It was unnecessary to have an indiscriminate approach with a high level of protection at all sites regardless of whether activities would impact on a feature.
  - The rationale for identifying the site options was not clear.
Socio-economic issues should have been considered earlier.

• The Welsh Government should work more closely with coastal communities and relevant government departments should also work in a more joined up manner.

• The Welsh Government should focus on effectively managing and enforcing its existing marine protected areas before designating new sites.

• The consultation process was under-resourced.

Legal obligations
Part V of the MaCAA provides a broad range of powers to conserve the marine environment through the designation of MCZs.

• The main legal obligation is to use the MCZ power as a tool to contribute towards a network of MPAs in UK seas although no timescale is attached.

• Under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) the Welsh Government is also required to contribute towards a representative and coherent well managed network of MPAs by the end of 2016.

• There is no specific requirement for highly protected sites under the legislation; however the powers within MaCAA do allow for MCZs to be designated in addition to any determined necessary to meet the requirements of the network. These can be at any level of protection deemed necessary and could even have varying levels of protection within them.

• Upon commencement of Part V of MaCAA in Wales\(^5\), the MCZ legislation will replace the Marine Nature Reserve legislation and so Skomer Marine Nature Reserve will become Skomer MCZ.

• Under MaCAA there is a duty to review and report every 6 years on the extent to which the Welsh Government has achieved the objective of contributing to a UK network of MPAs. The report must identify further steps needed to meet the objective as well as specific details on any MCZs that have been designated.

Approach to designating MCZs in other UK administrations
Defra and the Scottish Government have taken a different approach to identifying their MCZs or equivalents\(^6\). The Task and Finish Team reviewed these approaches and concluded that some of the elements would be worthy of consideration in Wales, namely:

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\(^5\) The Welsh Government is keeping under review the commencement of Part V and will make a statement later this year.

\(^6\) The Northern Ireland Marine Bill is currently under consideration by the Northern Ireland Assembly.
• Undertake a gap analysis of the contribution of the existing areas in Wales (MPAs and other area-based measures) to the network and identify shortfalls in the protection of features.

• Develop a site selection process with stakeholder engagement built in at key stages to ensure that they are well informed and given the opportunity to contribute.

• Map the activities of stakeholders and use this information where possible to locate MCZs in areas that would cause least disruption to marine users.

Future approach to MCZs in Wales

The Task and Finish Team proposes a new approach to using the MCZ power where the level of protection and site management is determined on a site by site basis following a risk-based approach to meet any shortfall in the MPA network. The team suggests that this approach should be delivered using a new 9 step process to identify and select MCZs (Appendix 2).

The 2012 consultation generated a considerable level of interest in the protection and management of the marine environment in Wales. The Stakeholder Focus Group has demonstrated an enthusiasm for involvement and constructive dialogue and is a good model for developing in the future to build consensus-led solutions about how we manage Welsh seas. This presents a good opportunity for the Welsh Government to continue working collaboratively with stakeholders in delivering the marine programme in Wales.

MCZ TASK AND FINISH TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Response to the 2012 MCZ consultation

After reviewing the consultation feedback, the Task and Finish Team makes the following recommendations:

1. There should be a comprehensive review of the evidence, role and benefits of sites with a higher level of protection. It would be beneficial if such a review is done in collaboration with the other UK administrations.

2. If in the future sites with a higher level of protection are considered beneficial then the options for their selection and designation should be carefully considered and done with the involvement of local communities. In such instances, case studies for hypothetical sites could be prepared to demonstrate how novel solutions could reduce the impact on users, while still meeting conservation needs.
The Task and Finish Team concludes that there should be a different approach to using the MCZ power in Wales to meet the network objective where:

3. All options for highly protected MCZs included in the 2012 consultation should be formally withdrawn to avoid continuing uncertainty about their impact on coastal communities and businesses.

4. The level of protection and site management given to MCZs should not be pre-determined and instead should follow a risk-based approach determined on a site by site basis that seeks to maintain or recover the condition of site features.

5. There is a transparent process to identify potential MCZ sites with a socio-economic impact assessment at the earliest opportunity and active stakeholder participation throughout.

6. There is an integrated governance structure for the delivery of all marine strategies and programmes that balances technical and stakeholder involvement to find constructive solutions to manage Welsh seas.

7. Future consultations are better targeted and accessible to their intended audience.

8. There is an effective, proportionate and evidence based framework for the management and enforcement of all MPAs in Welsh seas.

Legal Obligations
After reviewing the legal obligations to designate MCZs the Task and Finish Team makes the following recommendations:

9. Use the MCZ power, as necessary, to designate MCZs to meet the requirements of MaCAA and contribute to the achievement of an ecologically coherent well managed network of MPAs as required under MSFD.

10. Use the MCZ powers to manage sites and protect MCZ features from specific activities which may have an impact.

11. Use the broader range of designation powers beyond the requirements of the network if there is supporting evidence of the benefits and where there is a consensus of stakeholder support, or solely on the basis of a consensus of stakeholder support.
12. Maintain the existing management regime at Skomer once it becomes an MCZ, unless there is a need for change\textsuperscript{7}.

**Future approach to MCZs in Wales**

As part of the Welsh Government’s integrated marine programme the Task and Finish Team makes the following recommendations:

13. Identify and select MCZs using a new 9 step process (Appendix 2) and following the five suggested cross-cutting themes.

14. Review the effectiveness of the existing MPAs in order to maximise their biodiversity benefits and explore the opportunities to enhance their social and economic benefits particularly in education, tourism and rural business.

15. Develop an effective and consistent MPA management framework to ensure that all MPAs in Wales are well managed, with reference to the work to date of CCW\textsuperscript{8} and the proposal submitted by the Welsh Fishermen’s Association ‘Striking the Balance’.

16. Review stakeholder engagement arrangements as part of an integrated marine governance structure to support effective policy making and delivery at a community level in Wales.

\textsuperscript{7} Upon commencement of the legislation in Wales Skomer Marine Nature Reserve will become known as Skomer Marine Conservation Zone.

\textsuperscript{8} MPA Management in Wales 1: Overview of current MPA management in Wales and a summary of new MPA management tools. MPA Management in Wales 2: Evaluation of current MPA management in Wales.
CROSS-CUTTING THEMES
The Task and Finish Team recommends that the Welsh Government should follow a number of cross-cutting themes when selecting and designating MCZs:

I. Maximise the biodiversity benefits whilst minimising any negative socio-economic impact.

II. Work closely with the other UK administrations to ensure that MCZs in Welsh seas contribute to a coherent MPA network.

III. Ensure that decisions about site selection and management are made on an appropriate evidence base.

IV. Balance technical and stakeholder input in the project governance structure and develop an engagement plan to ensure wider stakeholder involvement is embedded in the process.

V. Maximise EU funding opportunities to address identified evidence gaps through collaborative working.
The network of Marine Protected Areas (MPA)

The Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive requires Wales to contribute towards a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). At present there is no agreed definition of what an ecologically coherent network of MPAs should look like. However, a set of principles developed by OSPAR have been adopted by governments across the UK and have been summarised as follows:

1. **Features** - Represent the range of species, habitats and ecological processes and that the proportion within the network is determined on a feature basis.

2. **Representivity** - Taken together, features and representivity mean that the network should represent the range of species, habitats and ecological processes in an area.

3. **Connectivity** – ensuring the network is well distributed and takes account of linkages between marine systems.

4. **Resilience** - Adequate replication of habitats, species and ecological processes in separate MPAs in each biogeographic area is desirable where possible. The size of the site should be sufficient to maintain the integrity of the feature for which it is being selected.

5. **Management** - MPAs should be managed to ensure the protection of their features and to support the network.

Most of the above summary principles (1, 2, 4 & 5) are also reflected in the Marine and Coastal Access Act.

The OSPAR principles are guiding principles to help our understanding of what the network will look like and help the development of national guidance. The OSPAR principles do not set out exactly how they should be applied. For example, the OSPAR principles state that the network should include the range of habitats and species in an area but does not provide specific lists of habitats and species which would need to be developed by an analysis of the habitats and species in an area.

The Marine Conservation Zone Project (English inshore and English, Welsh and Northern Irish offshore waters) and Scottish MPA Project each developed a set of

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9 OSPAR Commission. Guidance On Developing An Ecologically Coherent Network Of OSPAR Marine Protected Areas (Reference number 2006-3)

guidelines for identifying national MPAs using the OSPAR principles\textsuperscript{11,12}. Guidance will need to be developed, tailored to the needs of Wales. This approach will also need to be compatible with that taken elsewhere in the UK to ensure the UK collectively contributes to a coherent network of sites.

\textsuperscript{11} Natural England & Joint Nature Conservation Committee June 2010, Marine Conservation Zone Project: Ecological Network Guidance
\textsuperscript{12} Marine Protected Areas in Scotland’s Seas: Guidelines on the selection of MPAs and development of the MPA network.
Appendix 2

A new approach to MCZ selection and designation in Wales
The Task and Finish Team propose a revised method of MCZ selection and designation in Wales with 9 steps which need to be completed by 2016:

1. Set up a balanced **project governance** structure.
2. Define the **network requirements**.
3. Quantify the **current network contribution** and identify shortfalls.
4. Identify all the **potential options** that could complete the network.
5. Assess **interactions between features and users** at potential site options.
6. Quantify the **socio-economic impact** of designating the potential site options.
7. Calculate the **site management costs**.
8. Identify the **preferred site options** for designation.
9. **Designation** of MCZ sites.

It should be noted that there is overlap between some of the project steps and therefore it is not entirely chronological.

1. **Project Governance**
The identification of any potential sites should be done in a manner that allows for balanced input, review, challenge and quality assurance from technical and stakeholder interests. Major stakeholder groups should be represented in the project governance structure to give guidance at each step of the process.

Natural Resources Wales will play a major role in the delivery of the project and will therefore form a key part of the project governance. The project structure should be integrated into the governance of the wider marine programme to ensure a joined up approach.

1.1 Establish a balanced project governance structure to deliver the MCZ project.

1.2 Review the project process; agree the project milestones and timescales.

2. **Network requirements**
At present there is no agreed definition of what an ecologically coherent network of MPAs should look like. However, in December 2012 the Welsh Government along with the other UK administrations published a joint statement confirming the
commitment to contribute towards a network as required under MaCAA and MSFD by following the OSPAR \(^{13}\) network design principles (Appendix 2). An interpretation of the OSPAR principles will be needed for Welsh seas that is consistent with the rest of the UK.

Clarity will be needed about which designations are intended to protect which features. At present, the suitability and role of spatial protection measures for protecting some mobile species including some species of birds, fish and cetaceans is subject to discussion at a UK level.

\(2.1\) The OSPAR principles outlined in the joint UK administration statement should be used to determine Wales’ contribution to a UK network, which in turn will contribute to an ecologically coherent network in the North East Atlantic.

\(2.2\) Specific objectives should be set to meet the agreed design principles. The objectives should be reviewed by the balanced project governance structure.

\(2.3\) List the network features for all MPAs and explain overlap between designations. Compare MCZ feature list with other administrations for consistency.

\(2.4\) Keep the potential for mobile species that are being discussed at a UK level as features of MPAs under review.

3. **Current network contribution**

The current suite of MPAs already makes a contribution to the network. In addition to MPAs other types of spatial measures, such as fisheries closure, may provide benefits for the protection of biodiversity.

\(3.1\) Carry out an assessment of non-MPA spatial measures (e.g. fisheries closures) in Wales to determine which could offer protection to MCZ features and establish clear criteria to qualify them as contributing to the MPA network.

\(3.2\) Carry out a data mining exercise to establish what data there is on the network features and where throughout Welsh waters. Existing data may need to be reprocessed and all data sources should be assessed for confidence to ensure it is fit for purpose.

\(^{13}\) The OSPAR Convention is the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic which has as a key part of its strategy to establish a network of marine protected areas which is both ecologically coherent and well-managed by 2016.
3.3 Carry out a gap analysis to quantify Wales' current contribution to the network and identify shortfalls. The analysis of the existing network contribution should ideally be assessed at a UK level.

4. **Potential options**

Shortfalls in the network contribution could be filled by a variety of different spatial measures. The gap analysis may identify more than one location option to address a specific shortfall in the network.

4.1 Identify all the potential MCZ options that could make up the shortfalls in the network contribution and flag their associated data confidence and feature quality. Prioritise the collection of additional data for low confidence options.

4.2 Develop existing and new partnerships with the Welsh Fishermen’s Association Ltd, universities, industry, other NGOs and Defra to facilitate the collaborative collection of new data where necessary.

4.3 Identify whether modification of an existing non-MPA spatial measures is an appropriate means to make up some of the shortfalls in the network.

5. **Interactions between features and users**

5a. **Activity Data**

Activity data is needed so that, when sites are selected, those with the least impact on users can be chosen, where possible. It may be necessary to collect new activity data to fill any data shortfalls. The scale of this work will depend on the number of shortfalls identified in the network and the number of potential site options that could make up the shortfalls. Some stakeholders may be reluctant to provide data because they have concerns about how their information may be used.

5.1 Undertake a comprehensive desk-based review of all existing activity data on the usage of the marine environment in Wales which is reviewed by the balanced project governance structure.

5.2 If additional activity data is required, it should be collected in collaboration with stakeholders where possible.

5.3 Formally agree with stakeholders the conditions of use of their activity data.

5.4 All existing and newly collected activity data should be quality assured by the balanced project governance structure and reported in an accessible format.
5b. Impact of activities
In order to apply a risk-based approach to site management, the risks posed by activities to a particular feature need to be quantified. This quantification can be conducted as part of a risk assessment where for each feature the interaction with all activities is considered. In the assessment the likelihood that an activity will interact with a feature and the severity of the impact on that feature can be tabulated in a risk matrix. A number of matrices already exist for assessing the vulnerability of features to activities although a number of these focus on different methods of fishing. A vulnerability matrix adapted for Welsh features and all activities should be used when assessing the impact of a particular activity on a feature and in the development of management measures.

5.5 Undertake a comprehensive review of currently available activity matrices. This should outline which existing matrices are most applicable to Wales and provide recommendations for additions or changes.

5.6 Produce a vulnerability matrix specific to Wales which takes into consideration levels of activity. The matrix should be reviewed by the balanced project governance structure and explained clearly to stakeholders.

5c. Minimising conflict
To minimise conflict, the distribution of options to make up shortfalls in the network should be compared with an activity map to investigate where features and activities coincide. Some gap features may coincide with compatible non-damaging activities which will not need to be managed.

5.7 Overlay the activity map and feature maps to identify a range of options which maximise biodiversity benefits and compatibility with activities.

5.8 Use the vulnerability matrix to help assess the impact of activities on features where they coincide.

5.9 Develop a methodology for setting conservation objectives\(^\text{14}\) which is determined by the needs and features of the site that allows for recovery or maintenance of condition as appropriate and produce draft conservation objectives for all site options so stakeholders can understand what types of activities may need to be managed.

\(^{14}\) Conservation objectives are required in the designating order for MCZs to identify the conservation aims for the features in the sites.
5.10 The range of options should be presented and discussed with the balanced project governance structure to reach agreement about the preferred list of sites to be considered for designation.

6. Socio-economic Impact
Efforts to minimise adverse socio-economic impacts are likely to be more effective if stakeholders are involved with the site selection process from an early stage. Exclusion or restriction of specific activities as part of an MCZ designation will have both direct and indirect socio-economic effects on stakeholders. Depending on the level of protection needed at each site, the scale of socio-economic effect would vary in magnitude. Designating MCZs may provide additional and exploitable socio-economic gains through improvements to ecosystem services.

6.1 Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the effect of MCZ designation on the socio-economic value of each potential site (including the impact of displaced activity) which is reviewed by the balanced project governance structure.

6.2 Review available evidence to quantify the potential improvements to ecosystem services and socio-economic benefit resulting from MPA designations.

7. Site management costs
If MCZs are designated in areas which overlap with existing MPA designations, they could be managed alongside existing operations which would reduce costs. If MCZs are designated in previously undesignated sea areas it is likely they will require additional management resources. Increases in site number, size, distance from shore and intensity of management will also increase conservation management and enforcement costs. Costs could be reduced through education initiatives to raise awareness across the MPA network and at an individual site level to reduce the impact of activities on specific features. Efforts to collaborate with third parties and other authorities could also reduce costs.

7.1 Estimate the costs for site management activities at all the potential MCZ sites. These costs should then be considered when identifying the preferred site options.

8. Preferred site options
It is intended that the process outlined in this document will generate a number of site options where MCZs could be located in order to complete Wales’s network contribution. To make informed decisions about the preferred options all the sites will need to be considered in a consistent manner.
The number of options will depend on the outcome of the gap analysis; if there are a large number of options, the preferred options should be identified in the public consultation along with the rationale for their selection and details of the other options.

8.1 Combine the outcomes from the site selection process in a report that describes the costs and benefits of all potential site options in a consistent manner including:

- General site description, including condition of feature(s) of interest
- Existing designations that coincide with the site
- Details of confidence in the underpinning evidence
- Biodiversity gains from protecting features with a network shortfall
- Eco-system service benefits to commercial species
- Draft conservation objectives and site management plans
- Socio-economic cost benefit assessment
- Site management costs

8.2 The balanced project governance structure to review and refine the report as necessary before preferred options are recommended to the Minister.

8.3 The Minister agrees to formal consultation describing all options considered and preferred options including the management proposals at each site.

8.4 Carry out formal consultation ensuring any lessons learnt from previous consultation are incorporated.

8.5 Review feedback from consultation with the balanced project governance structure and consider if any new information has come to light that changes preferred options.

8.6 Final recommendation for designation to Minister.

9. Designation
The Minister will designate MCZs by order, in line with Part V of MaCAA.
Appendix 3

MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES – TASK AND FINISH TEAM

Terms of Reference

Purpose
By the end of April 2013 advise how Welsh Ministers should take forward Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in Wales.

Objectives
1. Review the feedback from the first stage consultation on MCZs in Wales during 2012 and consider how this should influence the selection of sites.

2. Understand the requirements set out in the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to create MCZs and what we should do to comply with it.

3. Investigate the approach to MCZs in other UK administrations and how it should influence Wales’ contribution to the emerging UK Marine Protected Area (MPA) network.

Task and Finish Team
A multi-disciplinary team, maximising the use of existing expertise from within Welsh Government and government sponsored agencies. Non Welsh Government members will be on an attachment basis. It will have direct interface with and be supported by an external stakeholder focus group. The team will comprise of:

- Julian Bray (Lead) - Environment Agency Wales
- Phil Newman - Countryside Council for Wales
- Jo Murray - Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
- Jenny Oates - Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- Phil Wensley/Leanne Llewellyn - Welsh Government Fisheries
- Louise George - Welsh Government Marine Branch
STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUP – REMIT AND MEMBERSHIP

Purpose
To guide and support the Task and Finish Team providing a direct link with stakeholders and to ensure a timely, two way exchange of information. It will act to test ideas and advise on practical solutions. It will be able to contribute to, challenge and question the work of the Task and Finish Team as it progresses, including input to the draft report on recommendations.

It will meet with the Task and Finish Team on a monthly basis throughout the period of additional work.

It will be led and managed by Peter Davies Wales’ Commissioner for Sustainable Futures.

Membership
Welsh Fishermen’s Association
Welsh Aquaculture/MPAC
Milford Haven Port Authority
Renewable UK Wales
British Marine Federation
South & West Wales Marine Leisure Federation
Severn Estuary Partnership
Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum
Cragen Llyn a Mon
Pwllheli Partnership
Wales Environment Link
Marine Conservation Society
RSPB
Wildlife Trust Wales
WWF
National Trust
Gwynedd County Council
Pembrokeshire County Council
Beaumaris Town Council
Dale and Marloes Community Council
Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers
Welsh Association of Sub Aqua Clubs
British Association for Shooting & Conservation
Welsh Yachting Association

Governance
The Group will be advisory. Its views will be taken into account by the Task and Finish Team.