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Marine Scotland

Development of a Deep Sea Marine Reserve West of Scotland

SEA Post Adoption Statement

September 2020



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Report prepared by:



For:



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1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Scottish Government has made a long-term commitment to ensuring the sustainable management of the marine environment by balancing the competing interests of use and protection of the sea. This has included developing and implementing a coherent network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to benefit the conservation of vulnerable and characteristic marine species and habitats in Scottish waters. The designation of MPAs is a high policy priority and fulfils duties in domestic and European legislation, as well as contributing to wider UK and international networks of protected areas.
- 1.1.2 The deep seas around Scotland are home to some of the most vulnerable habitats and species on earth^{1,2}. A deep sea marine reserve is proposed for designation to prevent the further decline of these globally threatened habitats and species and facilitate their recovery. This will also protect the range of ecosystem services that deep sea ecosystems provide, including nutrient cycling and carbon storage³. When designated, the reserve will complement and form part of Scotland's existing Marine Protected Area (MPA) network.
- 1.1.3 The proposal for a deep sea marine reserve is intended to build on the EU Deep Sea Fisheries Regulation 2016/2336⁴ which bans deep sea trawling in EU waters at depths greater than 800 metres and closes vulnerable marine ecosystems to bottom gear fishing at depths greater than 400 m. The use of gillnets and entangling nets are also banned at depths greater than 600 m and restricted at depths between 200 and 600 m, according to EU Regulation 227/2013⁵. These EU Regulations complement other international regulations that ensure emerging extractive activities are appropriately managed in the context of the status of vulnerable habitats and species in deep seas around Scotland.

¹ Scottish Government (2011). Scotland's Marine Atlas: Information for The National Marine Plan. Deep Sea Habitats. Available at: <https://www2.gov.scot/Publications/2011/03/16182005/49> (accessed September 2020).

² JNCC (2012). Nature News Issue 27: Winter 2012. Improving our understanding of deep sea marine habitats. Available at: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20190405130638/http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-2131-theme=default> (accessed September 2020).

³ Hanley, Nick; Hynes, Stephen; Patterson, David; and Jobstvogt, Niels (2015). "Economic Valuation of Marine and Coastal Ecosystems: Is it currently fit for purpose?" Journal of Ocean and Coastal Economics: Vol. 2, Article 1. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15351/2373-8456.1014> (accessed September 2020).

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2016/2336 of the European Parliament and the Council of 14 December 2016 establishing specific conditions for fishing for deep sea stocks in the north-east Atlantic and provisions for fishing in international waters of the north-east Atlantic and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/better-future-eu-deep-sea_en (accessed September 2020).

⁵ Regulation (EU) No 227/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2013 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 850/98 for the conservation of fishery resources through technical measures for the protection of juveniles of marine organisms and Council Regulation (EC) No 1434/98 specifying conditions under which herring may be landed for industrial purposes other than direct human consumption. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013R0227> (accessed September 2020).

- 1.1.4 The Scottish Government initially considered three boundary options for the proposed reserve based on advice from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Marine Scotland Science (MSS). These comprised the Faroe Shetland Reserve (FSR) (Area 1), the Rockall Trough Reserve (RTR) which is now referred to as the West of Scotland site (Area 2) and a combination of both options (Areas 1 and 2). These areas are shown on Figure 1. The scientific advice showed that the West of Scotland site would increase the number of vulnerable species in the Scottish MPA network and make a significant contribution to the OSPAR MPA network. Scottish Ministers therefore decided to proceed with consultation on this site only and FSR was not considered any further.
- 1.1.5 The West of Scotland site was termed a 'deep sea marine reserve' during the consultation. If designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 the site will be an MPA, therefore it was a possible MPA (pMPA) at consultation. In this report, the terms 'deep sea marine reserve' and 'West of Scotland pMPA' are both used to refer to the site.
- 1.1.6 Sites designated in this manner are protected by provisions in s125 and 126 of the Act which places legal duties on public authorities not to put protected features at significant risk through their decision making. In addition, s140 provides general protection against intentional or reckless damage or destruction. Although a number of fishing activities are already banned or restricted in deep sea areas by existing EU Regulations, the establishment of an MPA will ensure that vulnerable deep sea habitats and species are protected from other activities that do not currently take place but that may occur in the future (e.g. deep sea mining).
- 1.1.7 The West of Scotland pMPA covers 107,718 km² of a diverse marine landscape to the west of Scotland; from the steep gradient of the continental slope across the sediment plains of the Rockall Trough, to the slopes of George Bligh Bank and Rockall Bank, with two isolated seamounts (Anton Dohrn and Rosemary Bank) as shown in Figure 2.

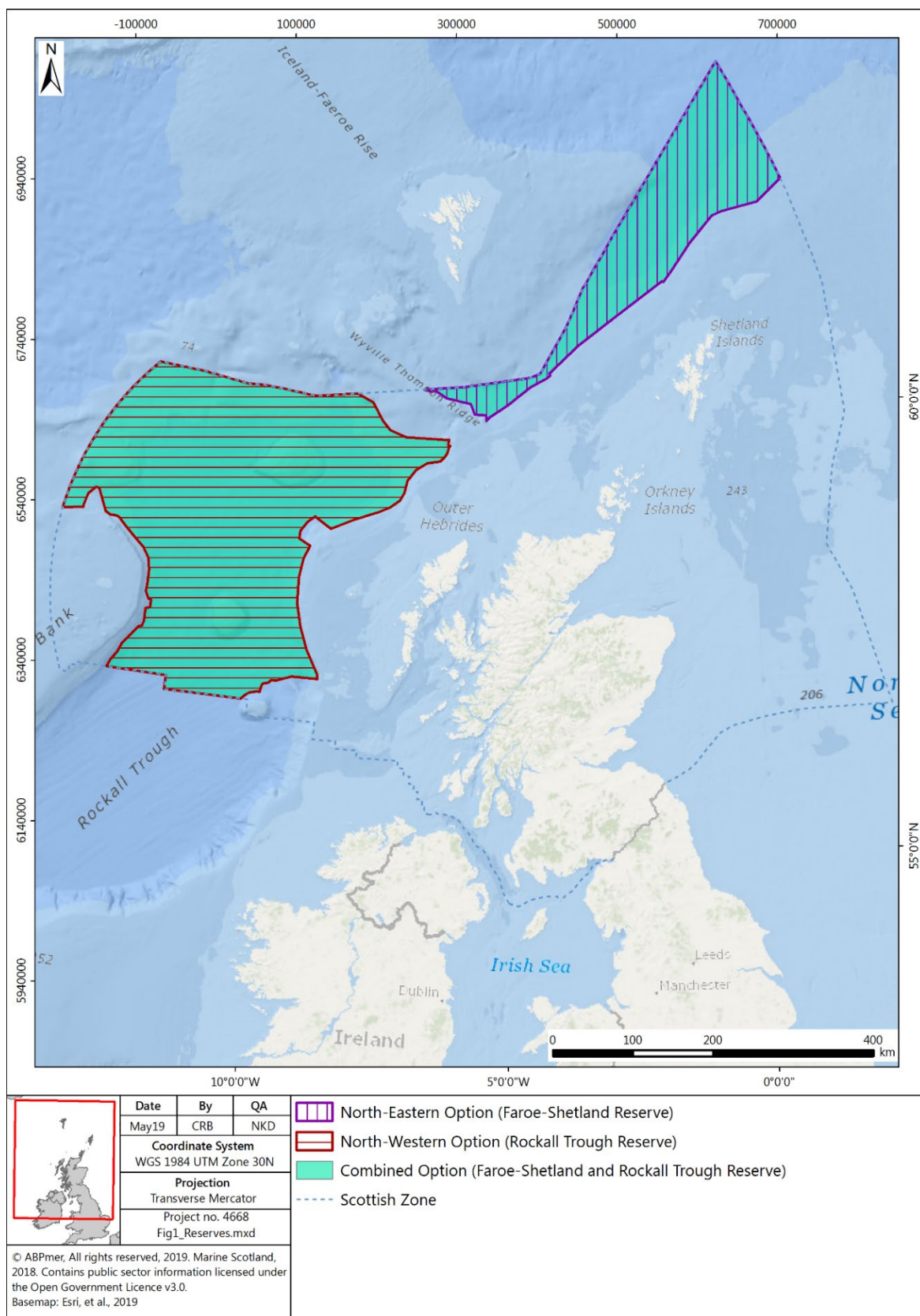


Figure 1 Map of proposed deep sea marine reserve boundary options considered by Scottish Government

Deep Sea Marine Reserve: West of Scotland area

Scottish Government (Marine Scotland) 2019. © Crown copyright. Contains data from JNCC and EMODnet

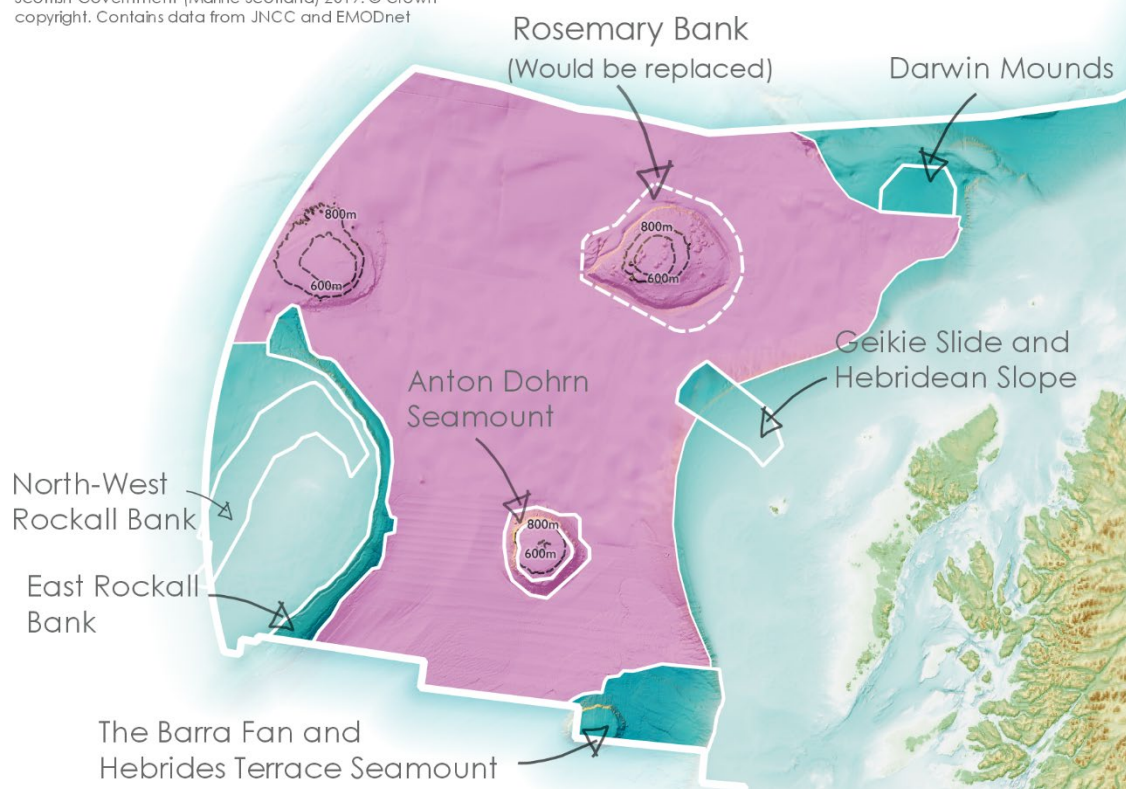


Figure 2 West of Scotland pMPA as consulted upon

1.1.8 The proposed protected features of the site are:

Biodiversity:

- Burrowed mud (including sea pens);
- Coral gardens;
- Cold-water coral reefs (including *Lophelia pertusa* reefs);
- Deep sea sponge aggregations;
- Offshore deep sea muds;
- Offshore subtidal sands and gravels;
- Seamount communities;
- Seamounts;
- Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*);
- Leafscale gulper shark (*Centrophorus squamosus*);
- Gulper shark (*Centrophorus granulosus*);
- Orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*);
- Portuguese dogfish (*Centroscymnus coelolepis*); and
- Roundnose grenadier (*Coryphaenoides rupestris*).

Geodiversity:

- Scour moats;
- Sediment drifts;
- Sediment wave field;
- Bioherm reefs;
- Biogenic sediment mounds;
- Parasitic cones;
- Slide scars;
- Cliff;
- Slide deposit;
- Seamount (Palaeogene igneous centre);
- Erosional scour fields;
- Iceberg ploughmarks;
- Large bank (Palaeogene igneous centre);
- Small scale ridges;
- turbidite accumulations;
- Prograding wedge;
- Ice-proximal and ice-contact facies (e.g. mega-scale glacial lineations);
- Sub-glacial tills;
- Ice-distal and glacimarine facies; and
- Continental slope turbidite canyons.

- 1.1.9 If the West of Scotland pMPA were designated it would protect all the features currently protected in the Rosemary Bank Seamount MPA. Therefore, Rosemary Bank Seamount MPA would be revoked. However, the Anton Dohrn Seamount Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated under the EU Habitats Directive, would be left in place as it protects rocky reef habitats (which are not a feature of the West of Scotland pMPA). The extent of the Anton Dohrn Seamount is within the West of Scotland pMPA.
- 1.1.10 The designation of this deep sea marine reserve as an MPA was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The associated Environmental Report was consulted on and the consultation ended on 31 December 2019⁶.
- 1.1.11 Based on the responses to this consultation, there is substantial public support for the designation of the West of Scotland deep sea marine reserve as an MPA. The majority of respondents to the consultation felt positively about the proposals and scientific evidence presented. Most also agreed with the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal and Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA).
- 1.1.12 Issues and questions raised during the consultation have been addressed or answered where possible by Marine Scotland in the consultation analysis report. The majority of these questions related to how the site was selected and how it might be managed in the future, if designated.
- 1.1.13 Following the public consultation, the eastern boundary of the site was slightly amended to ensure that it followed the 800-metre depth contour as intended.

⁶ Scottish Government, (2019) Proposed Deep Sea Marine Reserve: Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Report. September 2019. Available at: https://consult.gov.scot/marine-scotland/deep-sea-marine-reserve/supporting_documents/Development%20of%20deep%20sea%20reserve%20%20West%20of%20Scotland%20%20SEA%20%20Final.pdf (accessed September 2020).

2 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Process

- 2.1.1 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 ('the 2005 Act') requires public bodies in Scotland to carry out Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on their plans, programmes and strategies⁷. SEA is a way of examining plans, programmes and strategies as they develop, to identify any significant effects they may have on the environment. It ensures that environmental considerations are taken into account. SEA also aims to build in mitigation measures, to avoid or minimise any potentially significant adverse effects on the environment and look for opportunities to enhance a strategy's environmental performance.
- 2.1.2 This SEA process began with the production of a Scoping Report which was published in February 2019, setting out the proposed approach to the SEA, including the proposed scope and level of detail. Representations received from the SEA Consultation Authorities⁸ at the scoping stage helped to inform the following stages of the SEA process.
- 2.1.3 The assessment stage of the SEA was progressed, and the production of the SEA Environmental Report was published for consultation on 27 September 2019⁹, together with the following documents:
- Consultation paper on proposals to designate four MPAs in Scottish Waters;
 - An ecological overview of the West of Scotland pMPA;
 - A data confidence assessment of the scientific evidence;
 - Conservation objectives and management advice;
 - A methods document identifying the short list of proposed protected features for a deep sea marine reserve in Scotland;
 - A Sustainability Appraisal, combining environmental, social and economic effects;
 - A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA); and
 - A Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA).

⁷ Scottish Government (2005) Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, asp 15 [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/15/introduction> (accessed September 2020).

⁸ Historic Environment Scotland (HES), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

⁹ Scottish Government (2019) A consultation on proposals to designate four Marine Protected Areas in Scottish waters. Available at: <https://consult.gov.scot/marine-scotland/four-new-marine-protected-areas/> (accessed September 2020).

- 2.1.4 Following consultation, an independent analysis of all consultation responses received was carried out and formed part of the report by the Scottish Government that outlines how the views expressed in the consultation helped to inform the plan to designate four MPAs.
- 2.1.5 This Post Adoption Statement concludes the SEA process and sets out those ways in which the findings of the SEA Environmental Report, and the views expressed by consultees have been taken into account.
- 2.1.6 Section 18(3) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 sets out the information that should be included in the Post Adoption Statement. This can be summarised as:
- how the environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan, programme, or strategy (Section 3);
 - how the Environmental Report has been taken into account (Section 4);
 - how the opinions of consultees have been taken into account (Section 5);
 - the reasons for choosing the plan, programme or strategy as adopted, in light of the other reasonable alternatives considered (Section 6); and
 - the measures to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan, programme or strategy (Section 7).

3 Integration of Environmental Considerations

- 3.1.1 This section explains how key environmental considerations were identified and how these were taken into account in the plan to designate a West of Scotland deep sea marine reserve as part of the Scottish MPA network.
- 3.1.2 The overall MPA network is intended to help protect nationally and internationally important marine wildlife, habitats and underwater geodiversity, while also benefiting the wider marine environment, historic features, coastal communities, marine industries and recreational users¹⁰. Environmental considerations are therefore integral to the development of MPAs.
- 3.1.3 Furthermore, MPAs are a key element of the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring the sustainable management of the marine environment and balancing the competing interests of use and protection of the sea¹¹. They contribute to progress towards Good Environmental Status (GES) as set out by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC¹². They also form part of the OSPAR Convention network of protected sites found throughout the North East Atlantic Ocean¹³. Ten of the habitats and species identified for protection are on the OSPAR threatened and/or declining list 1¹⁴. In addition, they aim to maintain and enhance biodiversity, which is a focus of the Habitats (92/43/EEC)¹⁵ and Birds (2009/147/EC)¹⁶ Directives.
- 3.1.4 The programme for Scottish Government in 2017-18 committed to assessing the feasibility of creating a deep sea marine reserve. Two areas of search where water depths are greater than 800 metres were identified: the Faroe Shetland Reserve (FSR) (Area 1) and the Rockall Trough Reserve (RTR) which is now referred to as the West of Scotland site (Area 2) (Figure 1).

¹⁰ SNH (2017) Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas [online] Available at: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-areas/national-designations/mpas/> (accessed September 2020).

¹¹ Scottish Government (2011) Marine Protected Areas in Scotland's Seas – Guidelines on the selection of MPAs and development of the MPA network [online] Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/295194/0114024.pdf> (accessed September 2020).

¹² European Commission (2008) The Marine Strategy Framework Directive [online] Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32008L0056> (accessed September 2020).

¹³ OSPAR Commission (2015) Marine Protected Areas [online] Available at: <https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/marine-protected-areas> (accessed September 2020).

¹⁴ OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species & Habitats. Available at: <https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/species-habitats/list-of-threatened-declining-species-habitats> (accessed September 2020).

¹⁵ European Commission (1992) The Habitats Directive [online] Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm (accessed September 2020).

¹⁶ European Commission (2009) The Birds Directive [online] Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/birdsdirective/index_en.htm (accessed September 2020).

- 3.1.5 The Scottish Government drew on scientific advice from JNCC on which habitats and species within these two areas of search should be proposed for protection based on the Scottish MPA selection guidelines¹⁷ and a range of data sources. Fourteen habitats and species were identified in the West of Scotland site, of which ten are on the OSPAR list. Four habitats and species were identified in the FSR, of which one is on the OSPAR list.
- 3.1.6 Well over half of the FSR location is already in the North East Faroe Shetland Channel MPA. Furthermore, the four habitats and species identified are already well represented in the Scottish MPA network. Therefore, Scottish Ministers concluded that this location did not merit further consideration.
- 3.1.7 On the other hand, the West of Scotland site would increase the number of vulnerable habitats and species protected in the Scottish MPA network, as well as making a significant new contribution to the OSPAR MPA network. Therefore, Scottish Ministers concluded that this proposal merited further consideration.
- 3.1.8 The preparation of the Scoping Report and environmental baseline for the SEA ensured that environmental considerations were taken into account in the plan to designate a West of Scotland deep sea marine reserve. Subsequent consultation with the SEA Consultation Authorities assisted in confirming key environmental issues for further consideration in the assessment stage.
- 3.1.9 The West of Scotland pMPA was subject to environmental assessment with the results of the assessment informing its further development.

¹⁷ Scottish Government (2011) Marine Protected Areas in Scotland's Seas – Guidelines on the selection of MPAs and development of the MPA network [online] Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/295194/0114024.pdf> (accessed September 2020).

4 The Findings of the SEA

4.1.1 The Environmental Report details the conclusions and recommendations of the assessment on the plan to designate a deep sea marine reserve as part of the Scottish MPA network. The key themes drawn from the assessment are discussed below:

- The SEA findings concluded that the increased protection that would result from the designation of the deep sea marine reserve would provide environmental benefits for the overarching topic of Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna and contribute to the achievement of the SEA objectives. This is because the designation of the sites would provide developers with a better understanding of the species and habitats that need to be protected. This would help to ensure that developers undertake more effective Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs) that consider appropriate mitigation where necessary and therefore potentially reduce pressures associated with regulated activities in the deep sea marine reserve. Alternatively, developers may look to site their projects some distance from the deep sea marine reserve to avoid undertaking further assessment and mitigation. This in turn would result in reduced harmful activities and potential environmental benefits within these sites.
- The deep sea marine reserve would work cumulatively together with the wider MPA network and existing protection measures to further benefit the overarching topic of Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna in Scottish waters and contribute to the achievement of SEA objectives.
- No significant adverse environmental effects were identified and therefore no mitigation or monitoring measures were proposed as part of the assessment process.
- The manner in which the deep sea marine reserve is managed in the future to ensure that the conservation objectives for the protected features are achieved would have the potential to result in significant environmental changes. Consideration was therefore also given to the potential impacts that could arise from different management scenarios as part of the consideration of reasonable alternatives. These would result in either no overall immediate environmental impact or an overall minor immediate beneficial environmental impact, with the potential for greater future benefits.
- There is the potential for cumulative adverse effects on the environment from the displacement of fishing activities as a result of the management of fisheries in adjacent MPAs, however due to legislative restrictions on deep sea fisheries, this potential is limited. A more detailed assessment of cumulative effects will need to be undertaken should further management measures for the deep sea marine reserve be proposed in future.

- The management scenarios that have been considered as reasonable alternatives do not constrain future decisions and any management measures that may be adopted by the Scottish Government. Should any specific management measures be subsequently required to meet the objectives of the West of Scotland pMPA, these will be subject to further consideration under the 2005 Act, involving a separate SEA and public consultation. Should significant adverse effects be identified as a result of any future proposed management measures, there will be a need to consider appropriate mitigation measures and monitoring proposals.

4.1.2 A key outcome from the SEA process was the reaffirmation that the deep sea marine reserve offers an opportunity to protect species and habitats and provide wider environmental benefits. These principles are embedded in the plan to designate a West of Scotland deep sea marine reserve as part of the Scottish MPA network and is a key requirement to fulfil a number of environmental and conservation objectives (Section 3).

5 How the Opinions Expressed Have Been Taken into Account

- 5.1.1 Marine Scotland held a public consultation¹⁸ on the proposals from 27 September 2019 to 31 December 2019. The Environmental Report was published for consultation alongside the consultation paper, an ecological review, a data confidence assessment of the scientific evidence, a methods document, conservation and management advice, a BRIA, an SEIA and a Sustainability Appraisal.
- 5.1.2 Views were invited on the following five questions in relation to the West of Scotland pMPA:
1. Do you support the designation of the West of Scotland Deep Sea Marine Reserve?
 2. Do you agree that the scientific evidence presented justifies the case for the designation?
 3. Do you have any comments on the Conservation and Management Advice?
 4. Do you have any comments on the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment?
 5. Do you have any comments on the Sustainability Appraisal, including the Environmental Report and the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment?
- 5.1.3 In total, 44 respondents provided responses for the consultation. The respondent categories comprised Environmental; Fishing Group or Organisation; Individual; Other Industry Association; and Regulator or Local Authority.
- 5.1.4 A total of 38 (86%) respondents stated that they support the designation of the deep sea marine reserve. One (2%) respondent said that they did not support the proposed designation. A further one respondent (2%) did not know whether they supported the designation and four (10%) respondents did not provide an answer.
- 5.1.5 When asked whether they believed that the scientific evidence justified the designation of the proposed deep sea marine reserve, 37 (82%) respondents answered 'Yes' and three (7%) respondents answered 'No'. The remaining respondents either did not know (7%) or did not provide an answer (4%).

¹⁸ Scottish Government (2019) Proposal to designate a Deep Sea Marine Reserve in Scottish waters. Available at: <https://consult.gov.scot/marine-scotland/deep-sea-marine-reserve/> (accessed September 2020).

- 5.1.6 The most frequent issue raised by respondents in support of the proposed deep sea marine reserve was that the designation will help to protect and/or enhance biodiversity. This comment was raised by 14 (32%) respondents.
- 5.1.7 The most frequent issue raised by respondents with concerns relating to the proposed deep sea marine reserve related to their opposition to or reservations about the upper level management scenario of the designation. This comment was raised by 13 (30%) respondents.
- 5.1.8 In terms of the Environmental Report, one respondent noted that the environmental assessment found that there would 'no immediate benefit' to the environment under the lower scenario (designation alone), despite cost impacts to the oil and gas industry. The SEA stated that there would be no immediate benefit under the lower scenario, however, there would be potential for future environmental benefits, depending on site management. The potential costs to oil and gas are based on increased assessment costs for future consents under that scenario. Increased scrutiny under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and in EIAs for future activities will provide the potential future environmental benefits described in the SEA.
- 5.1.9 Management of the West of Scotland deep sea marine reserve will involve two elements. Fishing management requires further consideration of what management measures might be necessary. Any proposed management measures will be subject to further consideration under the 2005 Act, involving a separate SEA and public consultation. Activities other than fisheries will be subject to management as soon as the site is designated. This will be through the existing regulatory process where regulators and developers will need to consider JNCC's management advice for their activity. Developers may need to carry out additional evidence gathering prior to applying for consent and regulators may need to undertake additional assessment before making decisions.
- 5.1.10 Respondents from the fishing industry identified that the eastern boundary of the West of Scotland pMPA did not follow the 800-metre depth contour as intended. Records of fishing activity demonstrated that the proposed site boundary included areas of depths shallower than 800 metres along an area with a steep seabed slope. As inclusion of areas shallower than 800 metres, other than vulnerable seamount habitats was not the intention of the proposals, the fishing records were used to amend the site boundary (Figure 3). The change has very little effect on the size or extent of the site overall. The area comprising the amended site boundary is 107,718 km² (55 km² smaller than the original site).

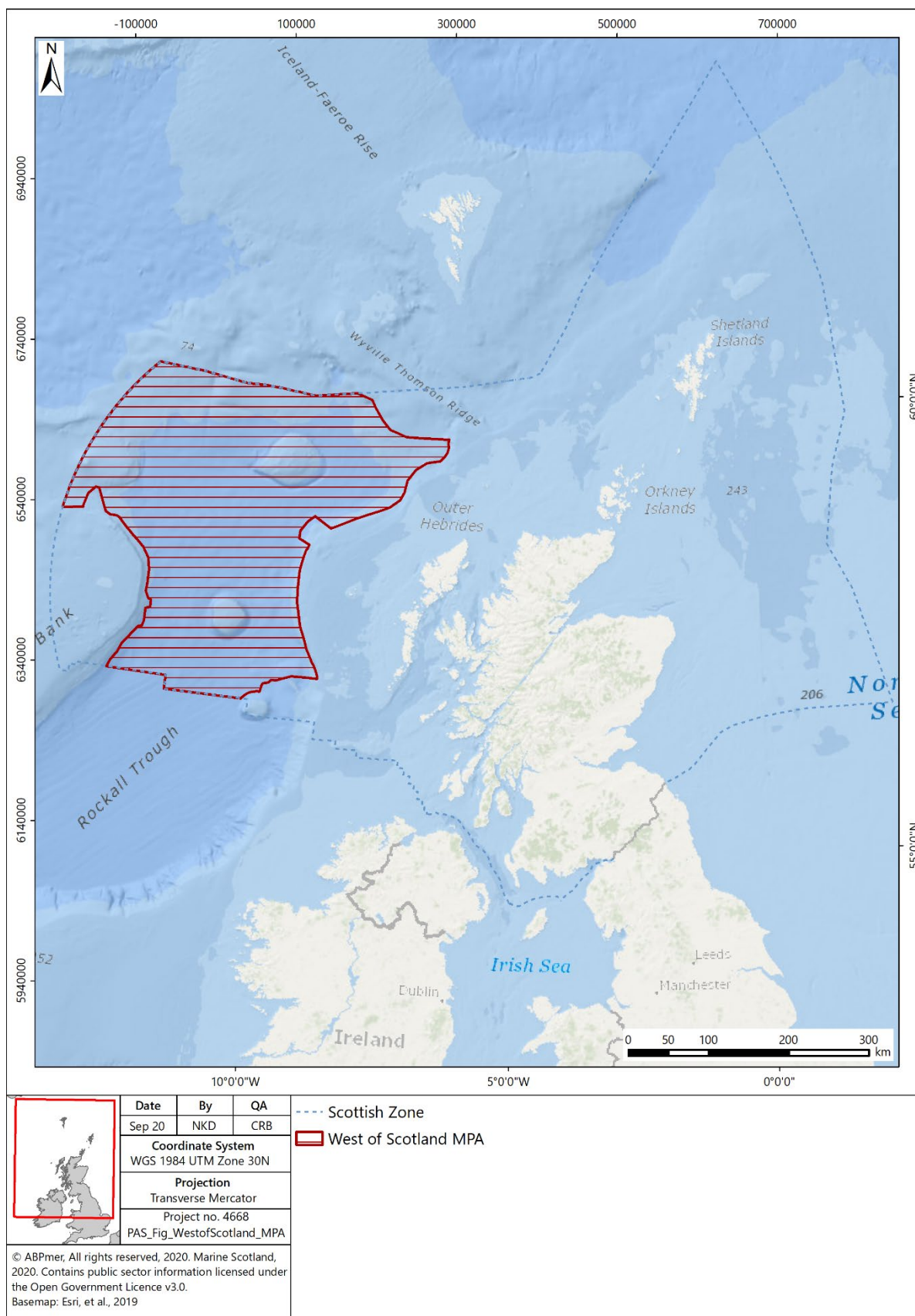


Figure 3 Map of West of Scotland MPA

6 Reasons for Designating the Deep Sea Marine Reserve as adopted

- 6.1.1 The 2005 Act requires that the Scottish Government identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of any reasonable alternatives to the plan or programme, taking into account its objectives and geographical scope.
- 6.1.2 Within the Environmental Report, the potential boundary options for a designated deep sea marine reserve (see Figure 1) formed one set of reasonable alternatives. The scientific advice from JNCC demonstrated that the West of Scotland site would increase the number of vulnerable species in the Scottish MPA network and make a significant contribution to the OSPAR MPA network. Scottish Ministers therefore decided to proceed with consultation on this site only and the other site was not considered any further.
- 6.1.3 Following consultation, as detailed in Section 5, the eastern boundary of the West of Scotland pMPA was slightly amended to ensure that it follows the 800-metre depth contour as intended (Figure 3). This boundary change does not necessitate further consideration under the 2005 Act as the integrity of all the proposed features remains intact and the environmental benefits will not significantly change.
- 6.1.4 In addition, the different ways in which the deep sea marine reserve might be managed in the future to support the achievement of site conservation objectives were also considered reasonable alternatives. As part of the development of the proposal for a deep sea marine reserve, Marine Scotland developed lower, intermediate and upper scenarios for managing pressures/activities within the deep sea marine reserve:
- Lower Scenario: Existing fisheries management and consenting processes;
 - Intermediate Scenario: No extractive activities that affect the seabed (e.g. demersal fisheries, oil and gas development, deep sea mining, etc.); and
 - Upper Scenario: No extractive activities that affect the seabed or the water column (e.g. demersal and pelagic fisheries, oil and gas exploration and development, deep sea mining, etc.).
- 6.1.5 The lower scenario will result in no overall immediate environmental impact, but the intermediate and upper scenarios will result in an overall minor immediate beneficial environmental impact. The potential for greater future benefits exists under all management scenarios.
- 6.1.6 These management scenarios were provided for indicative purposes and do not constrain future decisions or represent the final management measures that may be adopted by the Scottish Government for individual sites.

- 6.1.7 Any specific management measures that are subsequently required to meet the conservation objectives of the deep sea marine reserve will be subject to further consideration under the 2005 Act, involving a separate SEA and public consultation.

7 Monitoring

- 7.1.1 Section 19 of the 2005 Act requires the Responsible Authority to monitor significant environmental impacts arising as a result of the implementation of the plan, programme or strategy. The purpose of the monitoring is to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and to enable appropriate remedial action to be taken.
- 7.1.2 No significant adverse environmental effects were identified in the Environmental Report and therefore no mitigation or monitoring measures were proposed by the SEA (Section 4).
- 7.1.3 It should be noted that JNCC and the Scottish Government are committed to continued data collection and monitoring under The Scottish MPA Monitoring Strategy¹⁹. This sets out the drivers and direction for monitoring of the MPA network to ensure that appropriate information is collected to underpin assessment and reporting obligations. The strategy outlines the principles for prioritisation of monitoring efforts, how the data will be collated and data management.
- 7.1.4 A monitoring strategy for the deep sea marine reserve will build on the monitoring that is currently undertaken at existing MPAs. It will be developed through cooperation with the research community (including public sector bodies, non-governmental organisations and research institutions), in order to develop projects which, address the research priorities above. Based on monitoring that is already undertaken at existing MPAs, it is expected that fish surveys will continue to be undertaken biannually and benthic surveys every 12 years.
- 7.1.5 The results of MPA monitoring will be used to inform future decisions on the management of the deep sea marine reserve. Any management measures that are proposed in future to meet the objectives of the site will be subject to further consideration under the 2005 Act, involving a separate SEA. Should significant adverse environmental effects be identified as a result of any future proposed management measures, there will be a need to consider appropriate mitigation measures and monitoring proposals.

¹⁹ Marine Scotland (2017) Scottish Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Monitoring Strategy. Available at: <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/marine/marine-environment/mpanetwork/MPAmonitoring> (accessed September 2020).

8 Conclusion

- 8.1.1 The Scottish Government is content that the level and scope of the SEA is proportionate and that, given the high-level nature of the proposed designation of the West of Scotland deep sea marine reserve, it has been pitched at the appropriate level.
- 8.1.2 This Post Adoption Statement concludes the SEA process, setting out the ways in which the findings of the SEA Environmental Report and the views expressed during the public consultation have been taken into account in the plan to designate the West of Scotland pMPA.

Appendix A Abbreviations

BRIA	Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment
EC	European community
EEC	European Economic Community
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FSR	Faroe Shetland Reserve
GES	Good Environmental Status
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSS	Marine Scotland Science
OSPAR	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (Oslo/Paris)
pMPA	possible Marine Protected Area
RTR	Rockall Trough Reserve
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEIA	Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
UK	United Kingdom