



Marine Scotland

Development of four Marine Protected Areas Island Communities Impact Assessment: Screening

December 2020



PROPOSALS FOR FOUR ADDITIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS IN SCOTTISH WATERS

ISLAND COMMUNITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT: SCREENING

Introduction

1. The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 provides for a new duty on Scottish Ministers and other relevant public bodies that they must have regard to island communities in exercising their functions, and for Scottish Ministers this will also include the development of legislation. This duty is often referred to as ‘island-proofing’.
2. Scottish Government recognises the importance of island-proofing, and is therefore committed to considering the impacts of four possible MPAs (pMPAs) on island communities.

Overview of the proposals

3. We have made a commitment to ensuring the sustainable management of the marine environment. This includes the designation and management of the MPA network. The First Minister committed to the designation of four new Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas in the 2018/19 Programme for Government.

Table 1. Proposed MPA sites in Scottish Waters.

MPA Proposal	Proposed Protected Feature
Sea of the Hebrides	Biodiversity: Basking shark; fronts; minke whale. Geodiversity: Marine geomorphology of the Scottish shelf seabed.
Shiant East Bank	Biodiversity: Circalittoral sand and mixed sediment communities; northern sea fan and sponge communities; shelf banks and mounds. Geodiversity: Quaternary of Scotland - glacial lineations; soft and rock drumlins; iceberg scours.
North-east Lewis	Biodiversity: Risso’s dolphin; sandeels. Geodiversity: Marine geomorphology of the Scottish shelf seabed - longitudinal bedform field; Quaternary of Scotland – glaciated channels / troughs; landscape of areal scour; megascale lineation
Southern Trench	Biodiversity: Burrowed mud; fronts; minke whale; shelf deeps. Geodiversity: Submarine mass movement - slide scars; Quaternary of Scotland - sub-glacial tunnel valleys and moraines.

- MPAs are designated under Section 67 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 in the Scottish marine area and under Section 117 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 in the Scottish offshore region. There are currently 31 designated MPAs in Scottish waters.
- Following the provision of advice by Scottish Natural Heritage (also known by its operating name NatureScot), Scottish Government held a public consultation in summer 2019. The locations of the four pMPAs are shown in Figure 1 and the details of the proposed protected features are in Table 1.

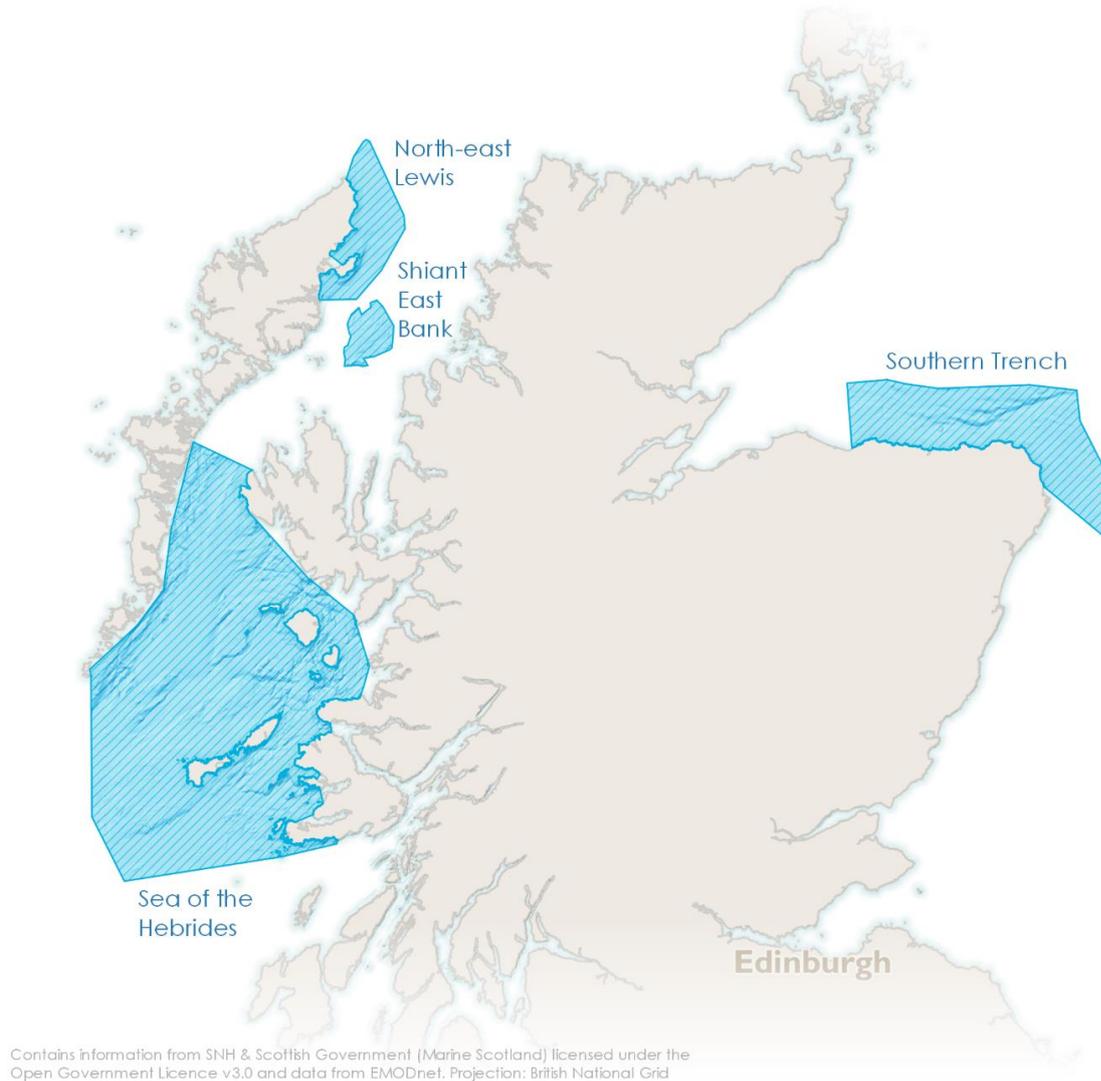


Figure 1: Location of the possible MPAs, as consulted upon.

Requirement for Islands Communities Impact Assessment

6. The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 clarifies that an Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA) will be carried out by a relevant authority when a policy is likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities) in the area in which the authority exercises its functions. The process for carrying out an ICIA is not wholly developed at this early stage following the recent passing of the Act, and the Scottish Government is currently preparing guidance.
7. The test for the pMPAs is to determine whether the impact of site designation is significantly different in the island communities when compared to other communities.
8. The pMPAs (Table 1) are spread across Scotland's waters. Three of the four pMPAs are adjacent to islands, which are defined for this purpose as land masses that are wholly surrounded by water. One site (Southern Trench pMPA) is only adjacent to the mainland. The island local authority areas and pMPAs adjacent to them are set out in Table 2 together with information on the main economic activities and population. Information on the mainland communities affected, for comparison, are shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Information on Island Communities.

Island Communities	Associated pMPAs	Main economic (marine) activities	Population ¹
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	North-east Lewis	Finfish aquaculture, Shellfish aquaculture, coastal protection, commercial fisheries, ports and harbours, power interconnectors, telecommunication cables	Eilean Siar – 27,684
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland Council	Shiant East Bank	Commercial fisheries, telecommunication cables	Eilean Siar – 27,684 Highland – 232,132
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll and Bute, Highland	Sea of the Hebrides	Finfish aquaculture, Shellfish aquaculture, coastal protection, commercial fisheries, ports and harbours, recreational boating, commercial shipping, telecommunication cables	Eilean Siar – 27,684 Argyll and Bute – 88,166 Highland – 232,132

¹ <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ods-web/area.html#!>

Table 3. Information on Mainland Communities.

Mainland Communities	Associated pMPAs	Main economic (marine) activities	Population ¹
Moray, Aberdeenshire	Southern Trench	Carbon capture storage, commercial fisheries, energy generation, oil and gas, ports and harbours, power interconnectors, telecommunication cables	Moray - 93,295 Aberdeenshire- 252,973

Impact on Island Communities

9. If the pMPAs are designated, the application of management measures will be put in place to achieve the set objectives. The impacts of the designations on communities are a result of how the community's interactions with the marine environment are affected by the management measures.
10. The Business Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) for each pMPA considers how ecosystem services benefits associated with the areas are likely to change. The ecosystem services framework provides a coherent approach to assessing how the benefits society derives from the environment are likely to change as a result of the designations and management measures.
11. Table 3a provides a summary of the evidence on how island communities in Scotland may be affected by the pMPAs based on assessments provided in the BRIA in terms of the benefits they are projected to receive. Table 3b provides the same information for other mainland communities in order to provide context.

Table 3a. Summary of benefits to Scotland’s Island Communities due to classification for lower to upper management scenarios.

Services	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (North-east Lewis)	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland Council (Shiant East Bank)	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll and Bute, Highland (Sea of the Hebrides)
Fish for human consumption	Nil	Nil – Minimal	Nil – Minimal
Fish for non-human consumption	Nil	Nil – Minimal	Nil – Minimal
Oil, Gas and climate regulation	Nil	Nil	Minimal – Low
Waste breakdown /detoxification	Nil	Nil	Minimal
Non-Use values	Low – Moderate	Low – Moderate	Low – Moderate
Recreation	Minimal – Low	Minimal	Minimal – Low
Research and Education	Minimal – Low	Minimal	Minimal – Low
Total Impact	Low – Moderate	Minimal – Low	Minimal – Moderate

Table 3b. Summary of benefits to Scotland’s Mainland Communities due to classification for lower to upper management scenarios

Services	Moray, Aberdeenshire (Southern Trench)
Fish for human consumption	Minimal – Low
Fish for non-human consumption	Low
Oil, Gas and climate regulation	Minimal
Waste breakdown/detoxification	Minimal
Non-Use values	Minimal – Low
Recreation	Minimal – Low
Research and Education	Minimal
Total Impact	Minimal – Low

12. The pMPAs will also impose costs on businesses that operate in areas where management measures are introduced. For costs associated with development and consenting of projects and plans, the requirements are effective immediately upon designation. The costs are estimated in terms of additional expenditure that would be incurred by these businesses (except commercial fisheries) over the lifetime of the assessment period. For the commercial fisheries, cost impacts are estimated in terms of impacts to Gross Value Added (GVA) associated with the value of landings that could be affected by the possible management measures.
13. Table 4 provides the summary of the costs, with figures taken from the partial BRIAs that were developed for the sites. Cost impacts are expressed as non-fishing activity (total present value quantified costs to impacts sectors over 20 years) and GVA impacts (costs from lost value of commercial fisheries). It assumed that for all activities other than fishing, the effect from within the pMPA occurs in the vicinity of the site (i.e. island-adjacent proposals will affect island communities).
14. It should be noted that while it is not possible to confidently quantify the benefits, the expectation is that the overall benefits to society outweigh any short term costs that may result from the proposals.
15. In order to assess the potential impacts on fishing given that the effects to fishing would not necessarily be felt in the direct vicinity of the pMPA, we have also used the information from the socio-economic impact assessment undertaken for the project. Table 5 provides a summary of annual average value of landings affected by home region under the intermediate management scenario, for island districts only. A full list of ports and regions is provided in Annex B. These cost impacts do not separate the effect from each individual MPA. The regions of home ports are provided in Annex A. Shetland region (taken together in the assessment with Orkney as 'Northern Isles') is the only wholly island region used in the assessment. It is assumed in this assessment that in any partially island region, impacts will be mainly seen in the island communities. This is based on the assumption that the home port of a vessel is likely to be in the vicinity of the home of the crew (who would be impacted by lost landings).

Table 4. Summary of pMPA Impacts on Scotland’s Island and mainland communities (present value of costs discounted over assessment period, 2015 prices).

Site name	Potential intermediate scenario over 20 years	Total GVA of impacted Local Authorities, £, million, 2015 ²	Impact comments
North-east Lewis pMPA	All activity other than fishing - £133,000 GVA - Cannot be disclosed as disclosure threshold not met	Eilean Siar - £460	Minimal and not disproportionate impacts on island marine users
Sea of the Hebrides pMPA	All activity other than fishing - £344,000 GVA - £16,000	Eilean Siar - £460 Argyll and Bute - £1,736 Total = £2,196	Moderate and not disproportionate impacts on island marine users
Shiant East Bank pMPA	All activity other than fishing - £4,000 GVA - £177,000	Eilean Siar - £460 Highland Council - £5,273 Total = £5,733	Minimal but not disproportionate impact on island marine users
Southern Trench pMPA	All activity other than fishing - £118,000 GVA - £1,288,000	Moray - £1,970 Aberdeenshire - £7,253 Total = £9,223	Not an island-adjacent site – used as comparator

² Income Approach, based on all economic activities in the area. Data from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossvalueaddedgva/datasets/regionalgvaibylocalauthorityintheuk>

Table 5 - Annual average value of landings and % loss of landings affected by region and home port of vessels affected, 2019 prices, intermediate scenario.

Region	District of Home Port of Vessel	Potential annual loss of landings	% of total value of landings to port	Impact and comments
Clyde (Partially island district)	Campbeltown	£7,000	N.D.	Moderate impacts but likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
Clyde and South Minch (Partially island district)	Oban	£1,000	0.0%	Minimal impacts, and likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
North Minch (Island district)	Stornoway	£10,000	0.3%	Moderate impacts
Orkney (Island district)	Kirkwall	£0	0.0%	No impacts
Shetland (Island district)	Lerwick	N.D.	N.D.	Cannot disclose impacts
South Minch (Partially island district)	Mallaig	£9,000	0.1%	Moderate impacts but likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
South Minch (Partially island district)	Portree	£3,000	0.2%	Minimal impacts and likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
TOTAL affected landings		£30,000		

Conclusion of assessment

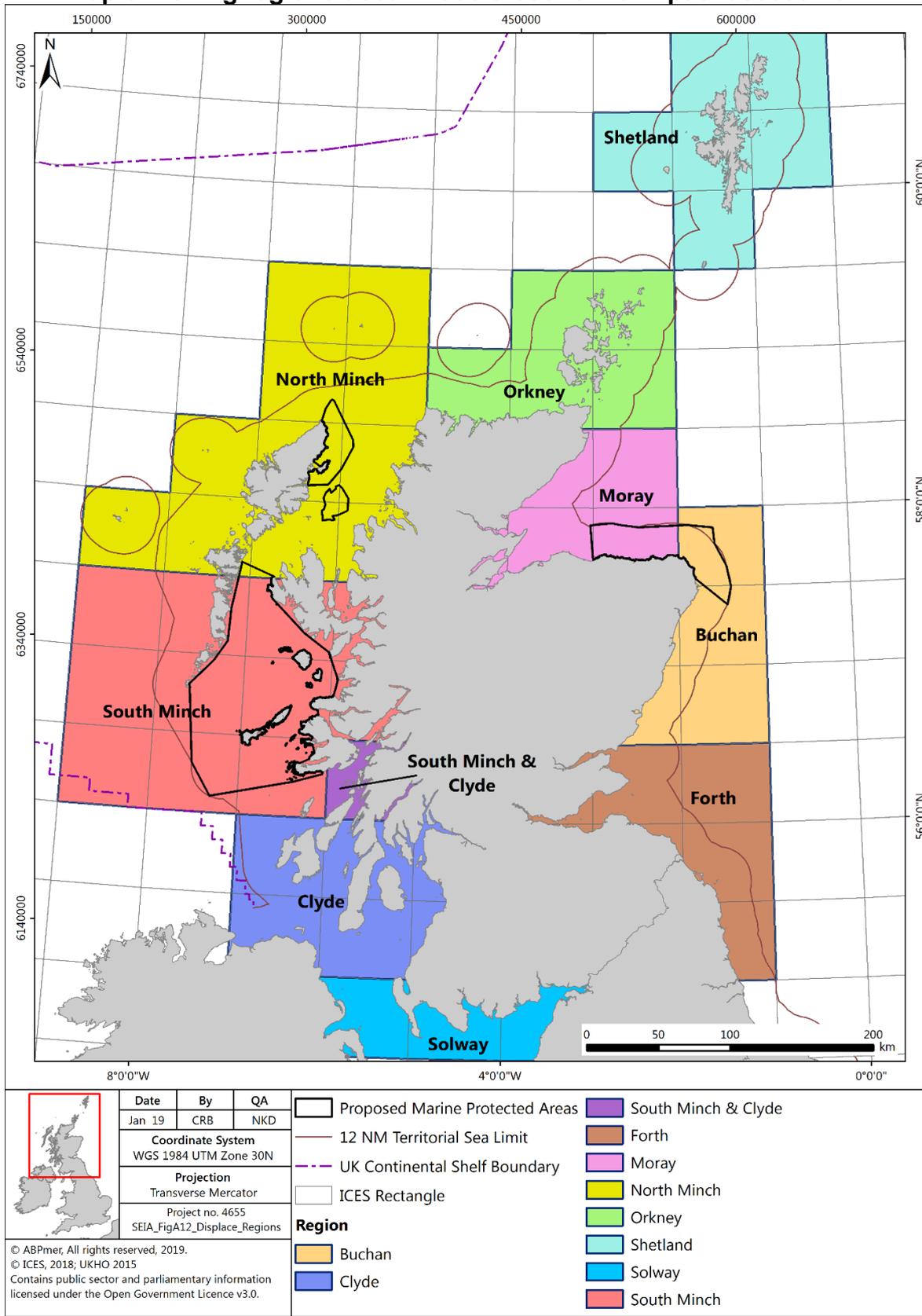
16. There is no significant difference in the overall costs and benefits of designating the pMPAs on island communities in comparison to designation on mainland communities (see Table 4).
17. In addition the costs in terms of GVA are negligible relative to the level of economic activity in the communities identified (see Table 4). None of the pMPAs taken in isolation, based on the indicative management scenarios from the BRIAs, result in disproportionate impact on island communities.
18. Cost impacts from lost landings are minimal to moderate in island regions. The total lost landings to all island ports is possibly up to 12%. These impacts are highest in the Stornoway and Mallaig districts. Given that the impacts are likely an overestimate, it is likely that the impacts on island communities from the pMPAs will not be disproportionate.

Implications

19. Based on the results of this screening, it is suggested that no Island Communities Impact Assessment will be required however we will await the publication of guidance on ICIA and review whether further statutory assessment is required at a later date.

ANNEX A

Map of fishing regions used in socio-economic impact assessment



Annex B

Impacts to Scottish Ports

Table 6 - Annual average value of landings and % loss of landings affected by region and home port of vessels affected, 2019 prices, intermediate scenario			
Region/District of Home Port of Vessel	Potential annual loss of landings	% of total value of landings affected across all ports	Impact comments
Aberdeen	N.D.	N.D	Not an island district
Peterhead	£6,000	2%	Not an island district
Buchan total:	£6,000	2%	Not an island region
Ayr	£0	0%	Not an island district
Campbeltown	£7,000	3%	Partially island district Moderate impacts but likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
Clyde total:	£8,000	3%	Partially island region Moderate impacts but likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
Oban	£1,000	1%	Partially island district Minimal impacts, and likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
Clyde and South Minch total:	£1,000	1%	Partially island region Minimal impacts, and likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
Eyemouth	£0	0%	Not an island district
Pittenweem	N.D.	N.D.	Not an island district
Forth total:	£0	0%	Not an island region
Buckie	£9,000	3%	Not an island district
Fraserburgh	£206,000	77%	Not an island district
Moray total:	£215,000	81%	Not an island region
Kinlochbervie	£1,000	0%	Not an island district

Table 6 - Annual average value of landings and % loss of landings affected by region and home port of vessels affected, 2019 prices, intermediate scenario			
Lochinver	N.D.	N.D.	Not an island district
Stornoway	£10,000	4%	Island district Moderate impacts
Ullapool	£7,000	3%	Not an island district
North Minch total:	£18,000	7%	Partially island region Moderate impacts to island communities
Kirkwall	£0	0%	Island district No impacts
Scrabster	£0	0%	Not an island district
Lerwick	N.D.	N.D.	Island district Cannot disclose impacts
Northern Isles total:	£1,000	0%	Partially island region Minimal impacts
Mallaig	£9,000	3%	Partially island district Moderate impacts but likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
Portree	£3,000	1%	Partially island district Minimal impacts and likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
South Minch total:	£12,000	4%	Partially island region Moderate impacts but likely these are spread between mainland and island ports
Other UK Ports	4	2%	
TOTAL	266	100%	