

**Flapper skate conservation – Interim protection measures
Meeting with Highland Council**

**MS Teams online meeting
01 February 2021 14:15**

Attendees

- Marine Scotland
- Highland Council

Meeting notes

- Marine Scotland welcomed everybody to the meeting and provided some introductions.
- Marine Scotland outlined the background document and went on to describe NatureScot's advice.
- Marine Scotland stated that urgent an MPA with associated MCO was under consideration subject to Ministerial approval.
- These proposed measures would prohibit mobile and static fishing gear, aquaculture and the installation of marine infrastructure to the seabed.
- Highland Council stated that the main risk to the proposed site by aquaculture would be heavy sedimentation.
- Highland Council confirmed that there are no active or historical applications for aquaculture in this area, Marine Scotland screen shared a map of the proposed site to provide context within the Inner Sound.
- Marine Scotland asked if Highland Council were aware of the work on Priorities Marine Features (PMF). Highland Council were not and so Marine Scotland provided an explanation.
- Highland Council suggested that Marine Scotland Science or NatureScot would provide advice on planning applications relating to PMFs.
- Highland Council asked if following NatureScot survey work the MPA may be extended.
- Marine Scotland said that this would be possible however a full consultation would be required before a permanent MPA was designated.
- Marine Scotland asked Highland Council whether the MCO was likely to help or hinder their handling of planning applications.
- Highland Council suggested that this is the kind of situation where a blanket ban is much easier to administer.
- Highland Council asked whether it would be possible have shapefile for this site and Marine Scotland confirmed they would try to acquire this on their behalf.
- Marine Scotland thanked Highland Council attendance at this meeting.