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# The Marine Bill and Marine Protected Areas

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## The Marine Bill and Marine Protected Areas

- The need for a marine bill to cover MPAs
- Content of the marine bill with respect to MPAs
- Highly Protected Marine Reserves





# MPAs – a review of the last two decades

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 – only 3 Marine Nature Reserves
- Randall Bill
- Review of Marine Nature Conservation





## Key Recommendations 4 and 8 of the RMNC Working Group's Report to Government relate to 'important marine areas':

- *Key recommendation 4:*  
Government should identify areas important for marine biodiversity and geodiversity in UK waters and those requiring priority conservation action. Management measures should be identified for important marine areas as considered appropriate.
- *Key recommendation 8:*  
The Working Group recommends that an ecologically-coherent and representative network of marine protected areas should be identified and established, and appropriate and proportionate measures applied to ensure their conservation needs are met.

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## The Habitats Directive is not enough

- Limited set of marine features – 8 habitats and 10 species
- Limited application – focus on habitats and species
- Conservation of features of European importance





## Managing activities in MPAs – some of the shortfalls



- Third party impacts – the need to act i.e. who and what?
- Timescales required for action
- Action tends to be reactive rather than proactive

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## A new era?

- The Marine Bill – an opportunity to address shortfalls in the legislative framework and management regimes
  - Nationally important Marine Sites, including Highly Protected Marine Reserves
  - OSPAR MPAs



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## A Marine Bill - MPAs

- The purpose for which MPAs are to be designated, and that of the network
- Duties and powers for the selection and designation of sites
- Duties and procedures relating to consultation and decision making
- Powers and duties placed on competent authorities to manage sites
- Details of offences, penalties and enforcement arrangements
- A timetable for implementing sites and networks

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## Highly Protected Marine Reserves (HPMRs)

- Sites and/ or zones in which damaging and harmful activities (notably extractive activities) are excluded
- Implemented along side multiple-use MPAs to underpin the conservation and recovery of biodiversity, and the maintenance and recovery of ecosystem processes

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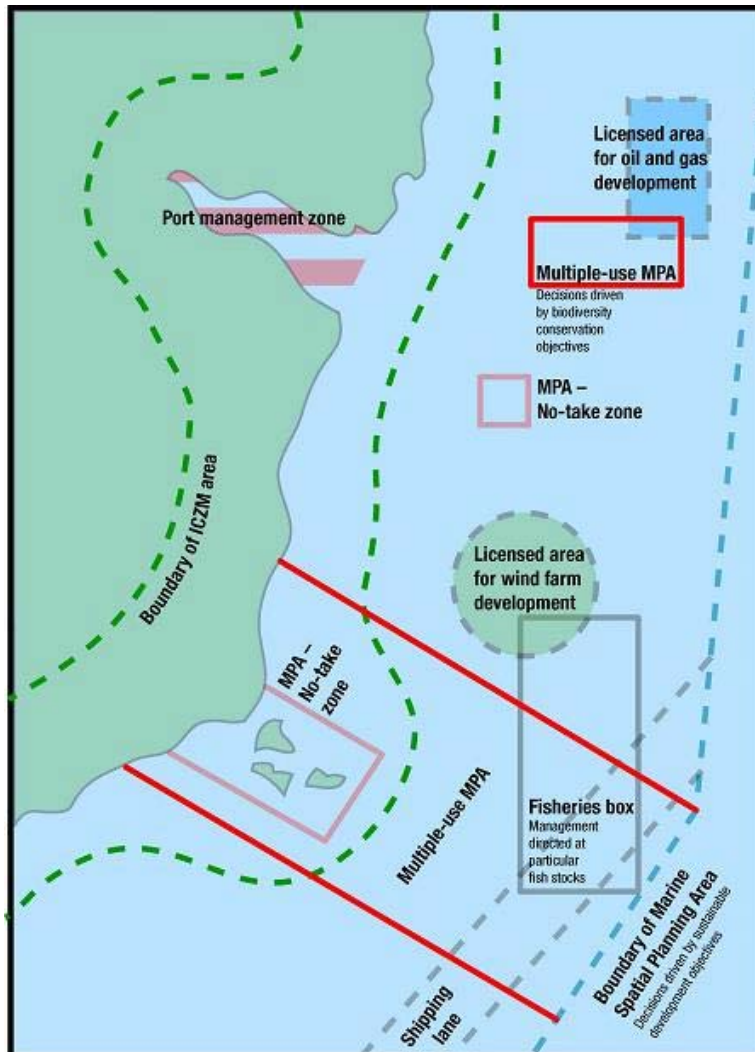


## The potential role of HPMRs

- Scientific reference areas
- Education and awareness
- Prioritising recovery and support for network resilience
- Areas set aside for intrinsic human enjoyment

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From: Marine Protected Areas in the context of Marine Spatial Planning – discussing the links. A report for WWF-UK. S. Gubbay, November 2004.

## HPMRs – the potential for achieving some dual objectives

For example – fisheries:

- Areas with increased biomass of commercial and ecologically important species resulting in ‘spill over’ effect
- Areas where species can achieve maximum growth and increased fecundity



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## MPA networks

- Ecological coherence and resilience
- Representative of the full range of biodiversity

From theory to application:

- Build on the work of the Irish Sea Pilot
- OSPAR process

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To Summarize:

The marine bill provides a unique opportunity to provide for the designation and effective management of a representative network of Nationally important Marine Sites which must include a suite of Highly Protected Marine Reserves