Marine Conservation Zone Assessment

Site name: Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ
UKMO 20160002

Protected feature(s):
Low energy intertidal rock
Moderate energy intertidal rock
High energy intertidal rock
Intertidal coarse sediment
Intertidal mixed sediment
Intertidal sand and muddy sand
Intertidal under boulder communities
Littoral chalk communities
Honeycomb worm (*Sabellaria alveolate*) reefs

Fishing activities assessed at this site:
Stage 1 Assessment
Intertidal handwork: Handworking (access from land), Handworking (access from vessel)
Seine nets & others: Shrimp push nets
Miscellaneous: Crab tiling
Bait collection: Digging with folks

Devon & Severn IFCA
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

D&S IFCA Reference
BFP-MCZ-008

Contents

Version	Date	Author(s)	Reviewer(s)
1	September 2018	Lauren Parkhouse	
	December 2018		Sarah Clark

1. Introduction

This assessment has been undertaken by Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) in order to document and determine whether management measures are required to achieve the conservation objectives of marine conservation zones (MCZs). The IFCA's responsibilities in relation to management of MCZs are laid out in Sections 124 to 126, & 154 to 157 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

2. MCZ site name(s), and location

Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ is an inshore site located on the coast of north Devon in the south west of England. The site covers an area of 104 km². This site protects a wide range of habitats, from beaches of intertidal sand, which are exposed to the air at low tide and below water at high tide, to subtidal sediment and rock habitats, which are permanently submerged.

Further information regarding the MCZ and its protected feature can be found in the Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ Factsheet.

3. Feature(s) / habitat(s) of conservation importance (FOCI/HOCI) and conservation objectives

Table 1 - Protected features relevant to this assessment

Feature	General management approach
Low energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal mixed sediments	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal underboulder communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Littoral chalk communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Honeycomb worm (*Sabellaria alveolate*)	Maintain in favourable condition

4. Gear/feature interaction in the MCZ categorised as 'red' risk and overview of management measure

The management measures for circalittoral and infralittoral rock are still under consideration.

5. Activities under consideration

- Intertidal handwork: Handworking (access from vessel), Handworking (access from land)

  A small area of the classified, Pullys mussel bed, is within the MCZ (Annex 1, figure 2). Hand working (access from vessel) is thought to be occurring at very low levels for mussels.
  Hand netting for prawns and hooking for lobsters occurs recreationally at a low level on the intertidal rocky shore. No other hand working is believed to be carried out.

- Seine nets & others: Shrimp push nets

  It is not thought that shrimp push nets are used within the MCZ. The activity cannot be completely ruled out as it may be occurring at low, undetected levels.

- Miscellaneous: Crab tiling

  There is no known crab tiling within the site. Crab tiling occurs outside of the MCZ in the Taw Torridge estuary (Annex 1, figure 3). It is unlikely this would occur in the future, due to conditions not being suitable in the MCZ for this activity.

- Bait collection: Digging with forks

  There are no records of this activity taking place within the BFP MCZ. The activity cannot be completely ruled out as it may be occurring at low, undetected levels.

See Parkhouse (2018) for more information regarding fishing activities occurring in the Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ.

6. Is there a risk that activities are hindering the conservation objectives of the MCZ?

No,
Evidence:

- The activities are either, not thought to be occurring, or are occurring at very low levels.
- Under protection of the SSSI, Natural England manages the collection of mussels. Management conditions were put in place for the commercial removal of mussel for the entire estuary in 2015. See Parkhouse (2018) for more detail on this management.
- See Parkhouse (2018) for more information on fishing activity.

7. Can D&S IFCA exercise its functions to further the conservation objectives of the site?

Yes,
Evidence: Monitoring and Control Arrangements

Through the IFCA's Byelaw Review process, D&S IFCA will be reviewing all byelaws relating to hand-working. There is the intention to create a permitting byelaw that covers hand-working, this would allow the IFCA to monitor levels of this activity in the future and adapt permit conditions to changes in effort/ environmental conditions if necessary.

Under Natural England's current management of the removal of mussel from the Taw Torridge, monthly returns must be submitted to D&S IFCA by all commercial fishers. This allows D&S IFCA to monitor, from where and how much mussel is being removed.

8. Referenced supporting information to inform assessment

N/A

9. In-combination assessment

Table 2 - Relevant activities occurring in or close to the site

Plans and Projects		
Activity	**Description**	**Potential Pressure(s)**
No other plans or projects known to be occurring within Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ	The impact of future plans or projects will require assessment in their own right, including accounting for any in-combination effects, alongside existing activities.	N/A
Other activities being considered		
Activity	**Description**	**Potential Pressure(s)**
Towed demersal trawls and dredges	This activity does not occur in the intertidal, therefore no in-combination effect is likely to occur.	N/A
Pots/creels	This activity does not occur in the intertidal, therefore no in-combination effect is likely to occur.	
Static and passive nets	This activity does not occur in the intertidal, therefore no in-combination effect is likely to occur.	
Commercial diving	This activity does not occur in the intertidal, therefore no in-combination effect is likely to occur.	

D&S IFCA concludes there is no likelihood of significant adverse effect on the interest features from in-combination effects addressed within Table 2.

10. NE consultation response

Natural England has not been consulted at this stage.

11. Conclusion

D&S IFCA has concluded that Intertidal handwork: Handworking (access from vessel), Handworking (access from land); Seine nets & others: Shrimp push nets; Miscellaneous: Crab tiling, and Bait collection: Digging with forks are not likely to have an impact on the features of the Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ. The level of activity ranges from none to very low for the different activities. Although it has been concluded that there is no likely impact, D&S IFCA will be reviewing all byelaws relating to hand-working. There is the intention to create a permitting byelaw that covers hand-working, which would allow the IFCA to monitor levels of this activity in the future and adapt permit conditions to changes in effort/ environmental conditions if necessary.

12. Summary table

Feature or habitat of Conservation interest	**Conservation objectives/ Target Attributes** (Natural England, 2015)	**Activity**	**Potential pressures from activity and sensitivity of habitats to pressures.** (Natural England, 2015)	**Potential exposure to pressures and mechanism of impact significance**	**Is there a risk that the activity could hinder the achievement of conservation objectives of the site?**	**Can D&S IFCA exercise its functions to further the conservation objectives of the site?** **If Yes, list management options**
Low energy intertidal rock Moderate energy intertidal rock High energy intertidal rock Intertidal coarse sediment Intertidal mixed sediment Intertidal sand and muddy sand Intertidal under boulder communities	Extent and distribution Presence and special distribution of communities Presence and abundance of typical species Species composition of component communities	Intertidal handwork: hand working (access from vessel), hand working (access from land). Seine nets & others: Shrimp push-nets. Miscellaneous: Crab tiling. Bait collection: digging with forks.	• Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed. • Subsurface penetration. • Removal of target species.	Yes, the activities can take place within the MCZ.	No. The activities are either not occurring, or occurring at very low levels.	Yes, Management measures could include: 1. Monitor activity levels 2. Creation of hand working permitting byelaw will allow for any possible future management needs to be brought in place.

Littoral chalk communities Honeycomb worm (*Sabellaria alveolata*) reefs						

13. References

Parkhouse, L. (2018) Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ Fishing Activity Report. Devon and Severn IFCA Report.

Natural England (2017) Draft Conservation Advice for Bideford to Foreland Point Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

Annex 1: Site Map(s)

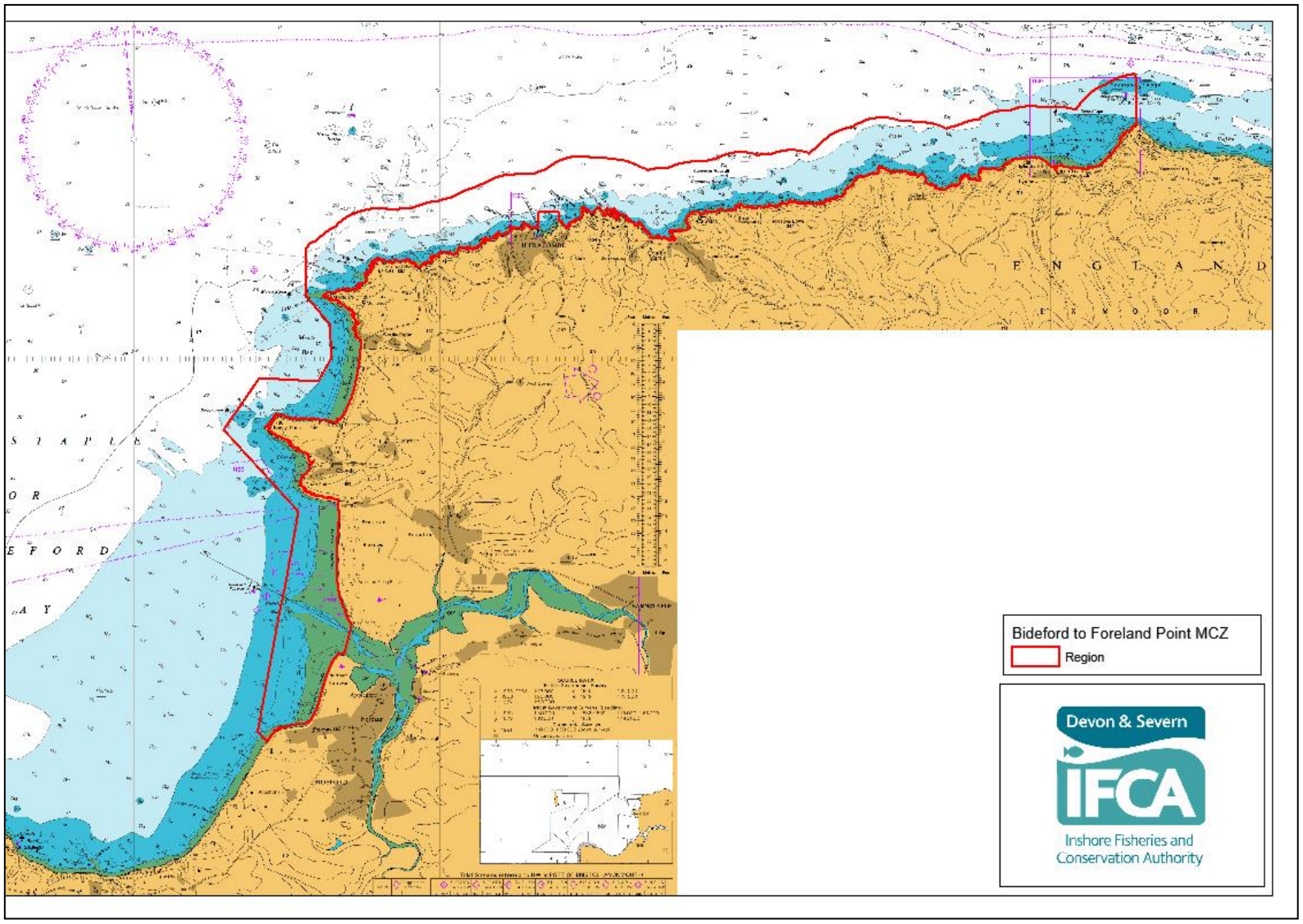

Figure 1 - Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ

Figure 2 Pullys Mussel Bed

Figure 3 Crab Tiles 2015

Annex 2: Pressures Audit Trail

PRESSURE	SCREENING JUSTIFICATION
Abrasion/ disturbance	**IN** - Need to consider spatial scale/intensity of activity to determine likely magnitude of pressure
Genetic modification & translocation of indigenous species	OUT - Insufficient activity levels to pose risk at level of concern
Hydrocarbon contamination	OUT - Insufficient activity levels to pose risk of large scale pollution event
Introduction of other substances	OUT - Insufficient activity levels to pose risk of large scale pollution event
Introduction or spread of non-natives	OUT - Fleet operates in local area only so risk considered extremely low
Subsurface penetration	**IN** - Need to consider intensity of activity to determine likely magnitude of pressure
Removal of target species	**IN-** Need to consider intensity of activity to determine likely magnitude of pressure
Removal of non-target species	OUT - selectivity of activities results in little to no incidental catch
Synthetic compound contamination	OUT - Insufficient activity levels to pose risk of large scale pollution event
Transition elements & organo-metal contamination	OUT - Insufficient activity levels to pose risk of large scale pollution event