



MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES IN THE SOUTH-WEST INFORMATION FOR DIVERS & SNORKELLERS



Finding Sanctuary is the most important opportunity for marine protection there has ever been in the south-west of England. Using an unprecedented level of public participation and the best science available, the project will work with sea users and interest groups to plan Marine Conservation Zones for a healthy, sustainable marine environment in the south-west.

FINDING SANCTUARY

Finding Sanctuary is a partnership project working with people who use the sea for their livelihood or leisure to identify Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) around south-west England. The goal of MCZs will be to safeguard and encourage recovery of wildlife and habitat, and to help ensure the long-term sustainability of marine resources in the region. Finding Sanctuary is the first of four projects of its kind around the English coast, working with sea users and interest groups to develop recommendations for Marine Conservation Zones.

Finding Sanctuary Project Area:



The Finding Sanctuary study region extends over 93,000km² of sea and includes 1,500km of coastline.

From the project outset we have brought together representatives from a wide cross-section of marine sea users and interest groups including scientists, anglers, divers and fishermen. These representatives sit on the Finding Sanctuary Steering Group. The Steering Group will work together to explore where MCZs could be located around the south-west, and will make their recommendations to Government in 2011.

DIVING/SNORKELLING AND MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES

With some of the most enticing waters around the country, diving and snorkelling have become popular activities in the south-west. Having detailed knowledge of local dive sites, divers will play an important role in developing ideas for Marine Conservation Zones, ensuring they protect key areas, such as where rare species occur.

In order to meet the targets they are given, the Steering Group may decide that some sites should be highly protected (also known as no take-zones). In these sites all extraction, including take by recreational divers, snorkellers or sea anglers could be stopped. However, by engaging with Finding Sanctuary local divers and snorkellers will help to ensure that all such sites are planned in a way that causes least impact to their activity. We hope that by involving divers and snorkellers from the earliest planning stages we will build understanding and support for the MCZ recommendations put forward by the Finding Sanctuary Steering Group.

MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES

Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) are a new type of Marine Protected Area (MPA) being introduced through the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act. MCZs will protect nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology and geomorphology. Sites will be selected both inshore and offshore, up to mean high water to protect the full range of marine wildlife.

MCZs together with other types of MPA, will make up an ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas. This means the MPA network will be a collection of areas that work together to provide more benefits than an individual area could on its own. MCZs will have a range of protection levels that reflect the level to which a particular habitat or wider ecosystem needs to be safeguarded. The Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities together with the Marine Management Organisation and the Royal Navy will be responsible for ensuring that MCZs are enforced.



PAUL NAYLOR

WHICH AREAS IN THE SOUTH-WEST WILL BE PROTECTED?

We don't yet know which areas will be protected, or what degree of protection they will receive. The Finding Sanctuary Steering Group, made up of a range of sea users and interest groups, has responsibility for developing recommendations on the location of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in the south-west, and how activities within them should be managed. Over a number of meetings the Steering Group will negotiate and discuss potential options for MCZs always looking to improve efficiency. This will ensure that MCZs are planned in a way that minimises impacts to sea users and maximises the benefits for nature conservation. Local MCZ groups will also provide input to the Steering Group to ensure that local knowledge and feedback is also incorporated.

The diving representatives that sit on the Steering Group will be representing your interests during negotiations. The Finding Sanctuary Steering Group will make its recommendations for MCZs in the south-west to Government in June 2011. Following a process of public consultation sites will be designated in 2012.

“IF YOU WANT TO HELP US ACHIEVE A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR THE SEAS AROUND THE SOUTH-WEST OF ENGLAND, YOU MUST GET INVOLVED NOW.”

Jane Maddocks, BSAC

HOW ARE DIVERS AND SNORKELLERS GETTING INVOLVED?

A growing number of divers and snorkellers are getting in touch with us to share their life-learned knowledge of sea areas, their views on MCZs and to tell us which areas are important to them.

Many divers and snorkellers have spent years exploring their local sites and have excellent knowledge of these areas and the plants and animals that inhabit them. In order to ensure MCZs are placed in the best locations, we need to draw on this wealth of knowledge. We also need to know which sea areas are most important to you. Your representatives on the Steering Group need to have accurate information about where diving and snorkelling takes place in the region in order to plan MCZs carefully.

Our liaison officers are meeting with divers and snorkellers throughout the region to help them map out their activity and record their valuable knowledge. For the most part this will be done through one-to-one interviews using questionnaires and maps. Although you do not have to disclose the exact location of your dive sites, the more accurate you can be, the better sites can be planned.



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

As diving and snorkelling are popular activities in the south-west, we are working in partnership with BSAC and PADI to ensure we speak to a representative sample of divers and snorkellers. Diving and snorkelling interests are represented on the Steering Group by:

Jane Maddocks
BSAC



Dale Spree
PADI



These representatives are responsible for ensuring that diving and snorkelling interests are taken into account during the planning of MCZs. It is the Finding Sanctuary team's job to provide them with the data they need to make decisions on your behalf and to help you establish links with your Steering Group representatives. Divers or snorkellers can also be represented on the local MCZ groups in Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly, Devon, Dorset and Somerset. These groups will provide local input, knowledge and feedback to the Steering Group.

GET INVOLVED

There are two ways to get involved:

1. You can contact your local liaison officer who will be happy to meet with you, explain the project in more detail, listen to your opinions and help you to map the areas where you dive or snorkel.
2. You can map the areas you use through our online mapping tool. This interactive tool allows you to see maps of the many different types of data we are collecting, and make your own additions to the maps. Visit our interactive map.

www.mczmapping.org

"Marine Conservation Zones are a real opportunity for protecting the underwater marine world we all love. If you want to help us achieve a more sustainable future for the seas around the south-west of England, you must get involved now. As your representatives on the Steering Group we need to know which sea areas are most important to you, so that we can ensure Marine Conservation Zones are planned in a way that allows you to continue to enjoy diving or snorkelling around the south-west."

Jane Maddocks
BSAC



CONTACTS

DEVON

Dave Murphy
Mob: 07814 781174
david@finding-sanctuary.org

DORSET

John Weinberg
Mob: 07788 675294
john@finding-sanctuary.org

CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY

Spike Searle
Mob: 07815 942420
spike@finding-sanctuary.org

SOMERSET

Martin Syvret
Mob: 07966 461810
martin@finding-sanctuary.org

FINDING SANCTUARY OFFICE

South West Food and Drink,
Darts Farm,
Topsham,
Devon, EX3 0QH
Tel: 01392 878328
info@finding-sanctuary.org
www.finding-sanctuary.org

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUGAL MATTHEWS
(CLIFTON SUB AQUA CLUB) AND STEVE TREWHELLA
BACK COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY FINDING SANCTUARY



Project Partnership

