

Fylde Marine Conservation Zone



Where is this site?

Fylde MCZ is located in Liverpool Bay, lying between 3 and 20 km off the Fylde coast and Ribble estuary. The MCZ protects an area of approximately 260 km². The depth of the seabed within the site ranges from almost being exposed on low tide (just 35 cm depth) to 22 metres at its deepest part.

Why is this site important?

The site was chosen for the extensive areas of subtidal sediment habitats and plant and animal communities present. These are considered to be good representatives of the seabed habitats and communities found on the eastern side of Liverpool Bay. The sediment habitats are known to support rich bivalve mollusc populations. The site includes important nursery and spawning grounds for several commercially important fish species including sole (*Solea solea*), plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) and whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*).

Fylde MCZ is located next to Shell Flat sandbank, part of the Shell Flat and Lune Deep Special Area of Conservation and offers protection to other rich areas of seabed outside of the SAC. The site is co-located within the Liverpool Bay Special Protection Area which provides protection for particular bird features including common scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) and red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*) and their supporting habitats.

What does this Marine Conservation Zone protect?

The subtidal sediments within the site are sand and mud. The seabed in this area is highly productive. It supports an abundance of animals such as crabs, starfish, shrimp-like crustaceans and bivalve shellfish, including the commonly found small nut-shell (*Nucula nitidosa*), a razor shell (*Pharus legumen*) and the white furrow shell (*Abra alba*). Flatfish, including sole (*Solea solea*) and plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), are also supported by the habitat within the site.

Feature	General management approach
Subtidal sand	Maintain in favourable condition

Who will manage Marine Conservation Zones?

Many activities within the marine environment are regulated through marine licences. More information regarding the marine licensing process in relation to MCZs can be found on the MMO website

www.marinemangement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm

Other activities are regulated through different mechanisms. For example fishing activities are managed through European legislation, national statutory instruments, byelaws and self-imposed voluntary agreements. Similar arrangements are in place to manage the range of activities that may impact MCZs including pollution, coastal development and recreation.

Management of sites is currently being prioritised nationally according to the potential or actual adverse impacts of activities on the features designated in relation to fishing activities. This prioritisation will be further refined at a local level taking into account relevant information and will guide regulators to those sites which may need protection before others.

Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the features. In cases where there is a high risk to designated features being damaged emergency measures may be put in place to ensure the protection of vulnerable habitats and species.

What happens now this site has been designated?

The site specific information below provides an overview of which activities may be affected by the designation of the MCZ and the current management measures. As with all management measures, they may, of course, be subject to change in the light of new evidence becoming available.

Current activities identified at this site which could be affected include port and harbour operations. Any future activities undertaken by the ports and harbour authorities will be regulated through the appropriate licensing regimes. MCZ designation will need to be taken into consideration when assessing environmental impacts of marine works as part of the licensing application process.

The Fylde MCZ site is within the jurisdiction of the North Western IFCA for fisheries measures out to 6nm and the MMO beyond this. Any fisheries related management that may be needed will be developed between these regulatory authorities.

For further information visit the IFCA website at www.nw-ifca.gov.uk

All relevant North Western IFCA district byelaws apply to this site within the IFCA jurisdiction out to 6nm, in addition to all relevant national and EU fisheries legislation such as Cod and Hake Recovery and Western Waters effort regime. For further information visit

www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/monitoring/regulations_bluebook.htm

Where can I find out further information?

An interactive map showing this MCZs and other marine protected areas is available at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5201>

Additional information about this site and other MCZs is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/protecting-and-sustainably-using-the-marine-environment>

and within Natural England's advice available at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6574636884033536?category=1499649>



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Annex: Management

Lead organisation	Activities
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fisheries (0-6nm) including commercial fisheries and recreational fishing activities such as sea angling For further information visit www.association-ifca.org.uk
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fisheries (management) (6-12nm)• Fisheries (enforcement) national and EU legislation• Licensable activities such as deposit and removal activities below mean high water springs, including subsea cables (up to 12nm), construction (including renewables <100MW, ports and coastal protection), dredging and disposal• Harbour Orders and Harbour Empowerment Orders• Section 36 and safety zone consents• Enforcement of licensable activity and other consents (including deemed marine licences)• Development of marine plans integrating the social requirements, economic potential and environmental priorities of marine plan areas• Activities requiring a wildlife licence For further information visit www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries or www.marinemanagement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm
Environment Agency (EA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fisheries management for migratory and fresh water fish• Coastal protection and flood management• Water quality• Permitted discharges from terrestrial sources For further information visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk/default.aspx
Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oil and Gas related activities• Renewable energy related activities For further information visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change
Harbour Authorities and local planning authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harbour authorities have management responsibilities for the port and coastal waters within their jurisdiction• Local authorities have role to manage, regulate and facilitate activities at the coast. These include management of coastal recreation, tourism, economic regeneration, flood protection, spatial planning and coastal zone and estuary management, For further information contact your local authority or IFCA
Department for Transport (DfT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible for shipping, harbours, ship pollution and offshore safety For further information visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport
Natural England (NE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public access For further information visit www.naturalengland.org.uk/