

Developing an ecologically-coherent and well-managed Marine Protected Area (MPA) network: Reflections and lessons learned from the UK

Abstract

Global trends in the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as a key tool in the sustainable management of our oceans and seas has reached fever pitch in the last decade. The UK's efforts over the past decade to develop a MPA network meets multiple international and national obligations and will hopefully deliver a healthy marine environment for future generations. The UK has a significant number of 'lines on maps' covering nearly 25% of its EEZ. Much effort is now focused on site management and monitoring programmes to check progress. Getting more than 580 MPAs that protect seabed habitats, fish, birds and mammals involved huge data collation and collection exercises, countless meetings and workshops with national and international sea-users, exploratory marine monitoring surveys and complex discussions between regulators and users on management measures. Multiple analyses have checked progress with meeting ecological network criteria. The UK is in a strong position to reflect on our experiences and help stimulate the exchange of ideas on marine protection at the international level. We will describe the key experiences from our work so far, positive and challenging, and outline next steps to fully deliver an ecologically coherent and well-managed MPA network in UK waters.

Key words

MPA; Network; Conservation; Lessons; Well-managed; Ecologically-coherent

Presenter

Hannah Carr, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK

Hannah.Carr@jncc.gov.uk

Co-authors

Peter Chaniotis, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK

Rebekah Cioffi, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK

Laura Cornick, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK

Alice Cornthwaite, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK

Jon Davies, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK

Hugh Wright, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK