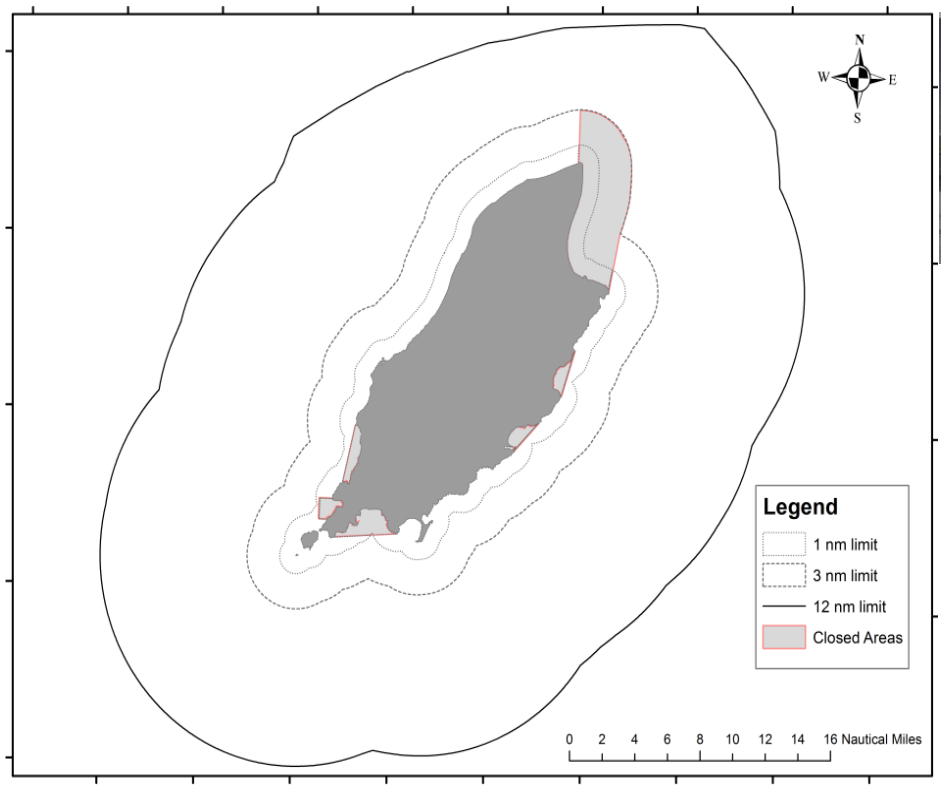
FUTURE FISHERIES

Consultation on Inshore Marine Zoning Plan for the 0-3 Nautical Mile Area of the Isle of Man Territorial Sea



Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture
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Isle of Man Government
Reiltys Ellan Vannin

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1 PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Due to the potentially complex nature of this proposal, a short summary overview is presented here.

- The sea fisheries strategy[1], approved by Tynwald in November 2015, provides a five-year plan for the sustainable development of Manx fisheries and marine environment protection.
- Priority objectives identified for sea fisheries includes the management of fishing access and effort around stock size and product value maximisation.
- Spatial management provides an important mechanism to achieve this; by separating different activities into different areas to maximise the benefits to fishing, conservation and recreation.
- There are currently six marine protected areas covering 124 km^2 (36 nautical $miles^2$), or 3.1% of the territorial sea. These areas include the Ramsey Marine Nature Reserve, which operates as a multi-zoned area providing different fishing and conservation opportunities.
- This consultation presents possible options for introducing a zoned spatial management approach for fisheries and conservation within the 0-3 nautical mile (M) area of the Manx territorial sea.
- This zoned approach is expected to provide the best mechanism for achieving sustainable fisheries while also protecting habitats and species of conservation interest and offering enhanced recreation opportunities.
- The models presented are based on available data and are considered the most likely to achieve an acceptable balance between different activities, minimising potential disadvantage to any particular group or interest.
- The specific details of the presented models, if implemented, may be modified as a result of the consultation responses, additional or new information.
- This proposal provides an opportunity to designate a new marine nature reserve in Manx inshore waters, offering long-term protection to internationally important species and habitats and helping the Isle of Man meet national and international targets for Marine Protected Areas.
- A zoned spatial management approach is also considered most likely to enable the Isle of Man Government to meet several strategic objectives and international commitments relating to;
  - economic development,
  - maximising resource value,
  - achieving fishing industry sustainability and diversification,
  - increased stakeholder involvement in management,
  - habitat and biodiversity protection (i.e. 10% of the territorial sea under protection by 2020),
  - carbon-emissions targets.
- There are good examples for zoned management approaches to achieve similar objectives from around the world.
- This consultation has been developed in close liaison with the fishing industry.
- Fisheries zoning and marine conservation objectives would not preclude the development of renewable energy in Manx waters.

[1] https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/environment-food-and-agriculture/fisheries-directorate/future-fisheries-strategy/

2 BACKGROUND

A high-quality marine environment, containing a diversity of species and habitats, can support a broad range of commercial, recreational and scientific activities, including various types of fishing, ecotourism, diving and research. In order to realise the potential opportunities for all of these activities it is necessary to protect the different parts of the marine environment that supports them, for example; conserving habitats for different life stages of particular species, or safeguarding populations of breeding adults whose offspring supply fishing areas.

An inshore marine zoning plan would seek to separate and manage activities in particular areas, allowing competing interests to reduce or manage their interactions, and for mutually-exclusive activities to be clearly separated.

This proposal presents options for a zoned spatial management approach to fisheries and conservation which is increasingly used to assist sustainable management of the marine environment. Marine spatial management has been employed for hundreds of years in many areas, including around the Isle of Man. More recently, in 2010, the Welsh Assembly Government excluded scallop dredging within 1 M of shore and, for the Firth of Clyde, there is currently a comprehensive spatial management plan proposal intended to 'increase the productivity, value and resilience of the commercial shellfish fisheries and promote the recovery of finfish stocks to commercially exploitable levels'[2].

The Isle of Man sea fisheries strategy '*Future Fisheries*', aims to deliver the following five-year objectives:

- A high-quality marine environment,
- Sustainable and diversified fisheries,
- Appropriate levels of fishing effort, linked to stock size,
- Value-added fisheries with sustainable economic value,
- Increased management involvement for marine stakeholders.

The Isle of Man Government has additional commitments under international and domestic agreements and policy strategies, including;

- UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Isle of Man biodiversity strategy '*Managing our Natural Wealth*',
- OSPAR Convention[3]: as a signatory to this convention the Isle of Man is committed to protect and conserve ecosystems[4] under the OSPAR List[5] of Threatened/Declining Species and Habitats.

Spatial management also enables a more strategic approach to fisheries management, providing opportunities to manage fishing effort, increase capture efficiency and the eventual value of seafood products. Such opportunities are much more limited when the coordination, planning and enforcement of fishing involving large numbers of vessels across a wide area is challenging in itself. By contrast, research in Ramsey Marine Nature Reserve has demonstrated that coordinated scallop harvesting in the Fisheries Management Zone can be up to nine times more energy efficient than scallop fishing in the rest of the territorial sea (Dignan *et al.* 2014), as well as catches being relatively more valuable. This has potentially significant implications for fuel savings, economic returns per unit of fuel used and the relative carbon footprint of the fishery (Walsh 2010, Dignan *et al.* 2015).

[2] http://www.sift-uk.org/media/file/Info%20Pack%20V2%20Nov%202015.pdf
[3] http://www.ospar.org/convention
[4] http://www.ospar.org/site/assets/files/1169/pages_from_ospar_convention_a5.pdf
[5] http://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/species-habitats/list-of-threatened-declining-species-habitats

3 PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATION

Definitions

1-3 M Areas

- 'The 'one-mile area' or 'three-mile area' means that part of the territorial sea of the island lying within one, or three, nautical mile (s) of the baseline from which the breadth of the territorial sea adjacent to the island is measured.'

Fishing gear types

- Mobile = dredges and towed nets (demersal and pelagic e.g. otter trawls, pair trawl),
- Static = pots and traps for crustaceans, molluscs and fishes.
- All other conventional fishing gear types are exempt from these definitions, as used in this consultation, although regulations associated with those gear types may still apply.

3.1 Overall objectives

To develop a marine zoning plan for achieving effective conservation and sustainable fisheries within the 0-3 M area of the Isle of Man territorial sea with the intentions of;

- Meeting key objectives of Government policy, strategy initiatives and international agreements; e.g. sea fisheries strategy, biodiversity strategy, OSPAR commitments, UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man and carbon emissions targets,
- Protection of key conservation features by appropriate measures, using an ecosystem-based approach and the possible designation of a second marine nature reserve,
- Reducing fishing-gear conflicts and maximising the economic potential of individual fisheries,
- Providing additional security for static fishing gear and reducing gear-damage costs,
- Increasing sustainability and overall economic value of all fisheries from better management and improved fishery stocks,
- Managing overall fishing effort within the 0-3 M area,
- Supporting MSC pre-assessment for all Manx fisheries and helping to regain MSC certification for queen scallops, via enhanced management options,
- Providing opportunities for the development of eco-tourism, food tourism, recreational and other marine-related activities.

3.2 Specific proposals

3.2.1 Objectives for the 0 - 1 M area

- The primary purpose for this zone would be marine conservation, static gear fishing and recreation.

- Mobile fishing gear access and effort would be managed around improving long-term sustainability and economic value.

Marine conservation in the 0-1 M

Inshore areas typically include more diverse marine habitats and species than offshore. It is also the most accessible zone for activities which rely on high-quality marine biodiversity features, such as diving, ecotourism and recreational angling.

The Isle of Man Government is committed to achieving protection of 10% of the marine environment by 2020[6], and this would be most effective if priority habitats and species are included. The zoning plans presented in this consultation come close to, or achieve this 10% target.

These proposals also include the opportunity to designate part of the 0-3 M zone as a new marine nature reserve, allowing specific protection where necessary, but also for fishing activity to continue in historically important areas.

Static gear fisheries management in the 0-1 M
Static fishing gear is considered to present minimal risk to most conservation features and has limited impact on non-target species (Coleman *et al*. 2013).

However, any area where mobile fishing gear is restricted through spatial management is likely to become more attractive to static gear fishing, and there is potential for an increase in this type of fishing. Therefore, it is anticipated that there would be an additional requirements for static gear management in future.

Recreation and ecotourism in the 0-1 M
A wide range of sports and recreational activities including kayaking, coasteering, swimming, surfing, diving and recreational fishing occur within inshore areas, many of which would benefit from a higher quality marine environment, or their spatial separation from other activities.

Ecotourism activities, including wildlife watching, are of growing importance to the Manx economy. Evidence from marine protected areas elsewhere indicates that less disturbance, recovery of inshore habitats and increased food availability boosts the abundance and activity of ecotourism species, leading to improved opportunities for tourism and recreation (e.g. Chae *et al*., 2012; Rees *et al*., 2015).

Mobile gear fisheries management in the 0-1 M
Mobile fishing gears are known to have negative impacts on complex seabed habitats (Hall-Spencer *et al*. 2000; Howarth and Stewart 2014). Therefore, managing the extent of mobile fishing gear activity within the 0-1 M would potentially provide better outcomes for marine habitat recovery and biodiversity conservation. It has also been shown that appropriate management of inshore areas can have significant benefits to offshore fisheries, as evidenced by current Manx closed areas and experience elsewhere (Beukers-Stewart *et al*. 2005; Sweeting and Polunin 2006; Howarth *et al*. 2011; 2015).

3.2.2 Objectives for the 1-3 M area

- The primary purpose for this zone would be for mobile and static gear fishing.
- These fisheries would be managed through control of access and fishing effort.
- The current open-access fishing arrangement would be replaced by a restricted-licence regime in order to maximise the effectiveness of fisheries management measures, effort reduction and maximising local economic returns.
- There are no further substantive conservation features currently being considered in this area, although the potential for future protection is retained.

[6] https://www.gov.im/media/1346374/biodiversity-strategy-2015-final-version.pdf

Mobile gear fisheries management in the 1-3 M

Both proposed models include a provision to manage access and effort for mobile gear within the 1-3 M via a restricted-licence regime for scallop and queen scallop resources. This area is shown in orange (figures 1 and 2) and is termed the Restricted-Licence Fishery Area (RLFA).

In both models this area would operate in a similar way;

- Managed under a fisheries management plan, which would aim to match overall fishing effort with the eventual number of vessels allowed to fish.
- Expected to decrease overall effort in this area, but would aim to maintain individual vessel's fishing effort and economic return. i.e. it would be achieved by reducing vessel numbers.

Static gear fisheries management in the 1-3 M

Under both proposed models static gear fishing would be permitted within the 0-1 M and 1-3 M areas.

The proposals would provide more security for static gear, since mobile effort would be better managed and communications between fishing sectors should be improved via management plans, thereby reducing gear-conflict situations.

Under model 2 (figure 2), the extension of the green 'static and conservation' zone into the 1-3 M, would also provide increased opportunity and security for the static gear sector in those zones.

3.2.3 Summary of options and proposed models

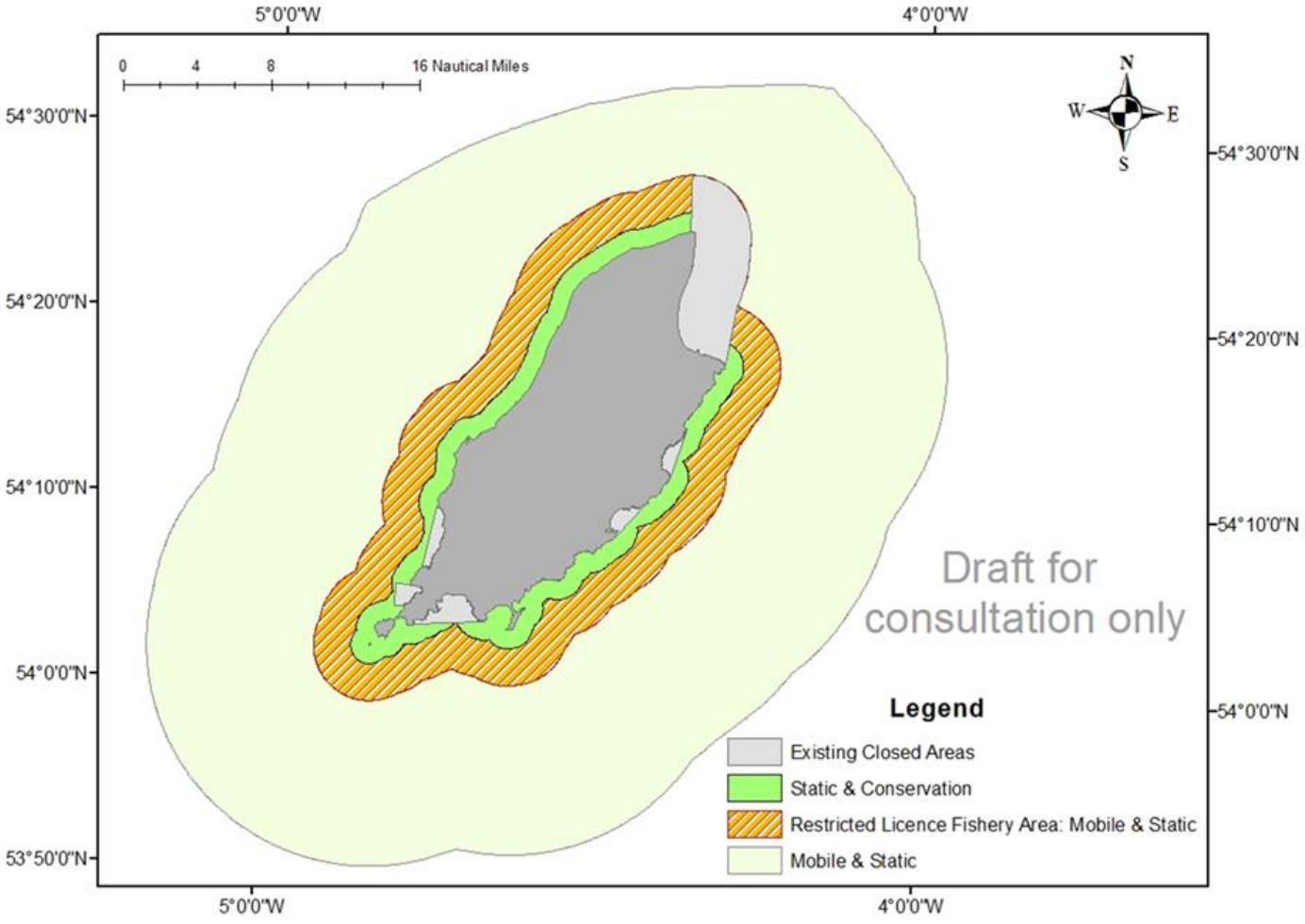
Three options and two potential zoned models (figures 1 and 2) have been developed based on the above considerations.

Option 1 Simple model (model 1)
This model uses more definitive separation of activities into different zones. It is clear and simple to understand, but does not accurately reflect current usage, and may therefore have a greater impact on some fishing activities.

Model overview

- Separation of the 0-1 M and the 1-3 M into two clear zones.
- The 0-1 M (green area, figure 1) for conservation, static gear fishing and recreation, with exclusion of mobile fishing gear.
- The 1-3 M (orange area) for mobile and static fishing gear.
- The 1-3 M would operate as a restricted licence fishery area and under a fisheries management plan designed to manage effort and maximise harvest efficiency and economic value for scallop and queen scallop.
- There is an option to designate the 0-1 M zone as a second marine nature reserve protecting inshore conservation features and providing a refuge for scallop spawning stock.

Figure 1 Simple model with 0-1 and 1-3 M areas strictly defined for purpose.



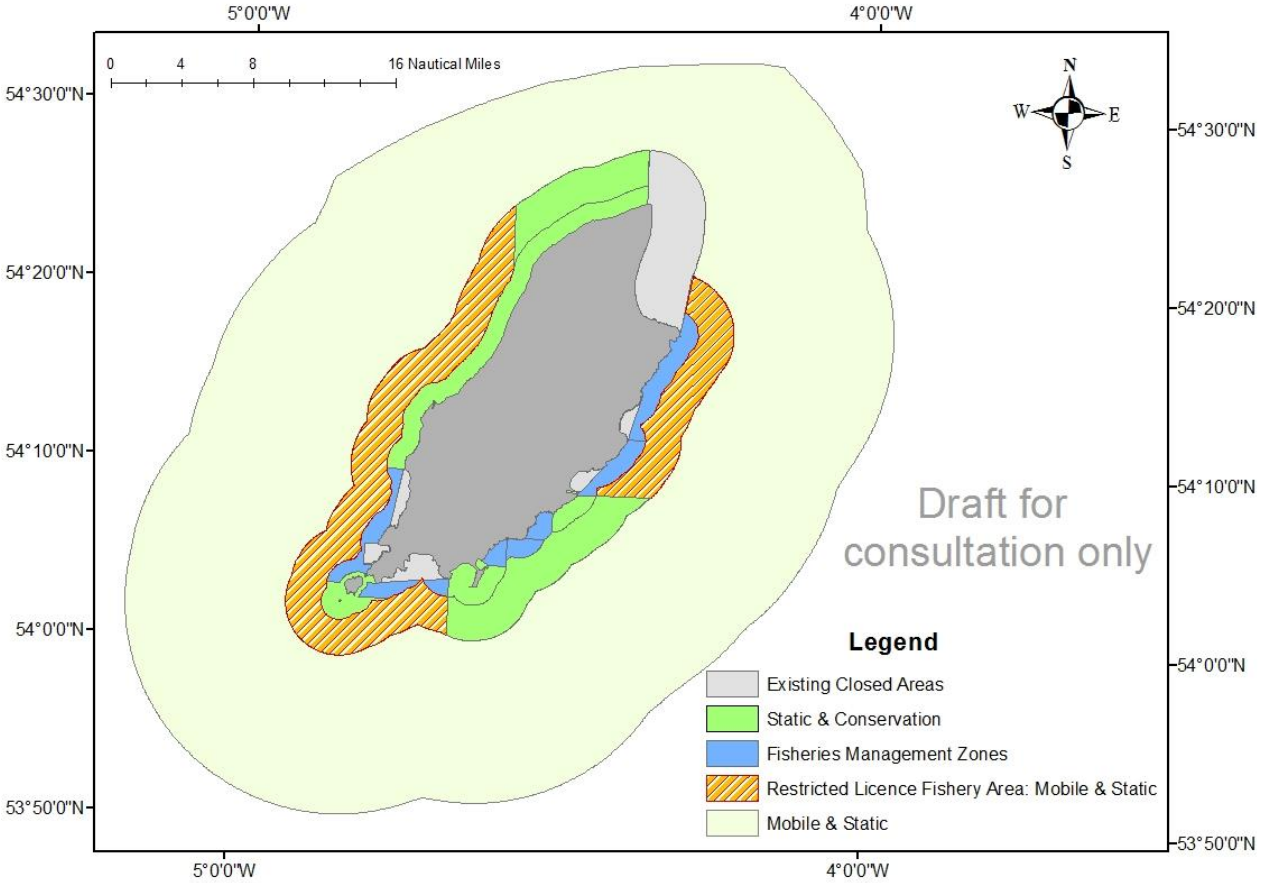
Option 2 Zoned model (model 2)

This model takes greater account of current fishing practices, in particular mobile gear fishing, and seeks to accommodate them as fully as possible. Conservation interests are well served, as are static gear fisheries, especially by the additional security afforded by fisheries management plans which would operate for mobile gear fishing within the 0-1 M and 1-3 M areas.

Model overview

- The 0-1 M primarily for conservation and static gear fishing (green area, figure 2), with exclusion of mobile fishing gear from those areas.
- Within 0-1 M, mobile gear fishing allowed within specified Fisheries Management Zones (FMZs) (blue areas) operating under a fisheries management plan.
- Fisheries management plans would be tailored to suit the characteristics of each area, and have more ambitious management objectives than would apply in the 1-3 M area.
- The 1-3 M (orange area) for mobile and static fishing gear.
- The 1-3 M would operate as a restricted licence fishery area and under a fisheries management plan designed to manage effort and maximise harvest efficiency and economic value for scallop and queen scallop.
- Option to designate the 0-1 M zone and additional green areas as a marine nature reserve, protecting conservation features and scallop spawning stock, but allowing mobile fishing in FMZs.
- For the area around the Calf of Man; conservation and static gear fishing area would extend all around the Calf out to 0.5 M from shore. Historic mobile fishing areas, predominantly to the north and east of the Calf, are included inside different Fishery Management Zones. These fishery zones are therefore separated, allowing for the development of management plans suited to their different economic, recruitment and productivity characteristics.

Figure 2 Zoned model with 0-1 and 1-3 M areas having some flexibility for mixing conservation and fisheries interests across both areas.



Additional consideration for options 1 and 2

Second Manx marine nature reserve

The 'green' static gear and conservation areas include the majority of candidate marine nature reserves identified in the Manx Marine Nature Reserve Project 2008-2011 (Gell and Hanley 2010). Within the two inshore marine zoning options there is an opportunity to designate the 'green' and 'blue' areas as a new marine nature reserve. The main protection measure would be the exclusion of mobile gear from 'green' areas, although mobile gear fishing would occur in Fisheries Management Zones.

There would be the opportunity to develop more specific marine nature reserve management within the 'green' zones (e.g. no-take zones if appropriate) subject to further stakeholder consultation. This approach would assist the Isle of Man in meeting its national and international obligations to protect 10% of national waters by 2020 and would highlight the protection of priority habitats such as horse mussel reefs, maerl beds and eelgrass meadows, as part of the OSPAR European network of marine protected areas.

This proposal for a marine nature reserve makes clear provision for continued mobile-gear fishing within designated Fisheries Management Zones which are located to include the majority of current fishing areas.

Option 3 Maintain current arrangements within the 0-3 M area.

- Continued open access to all areas within the 0-3 M, with the exception of areas where restrictions otherwise apply, e.g. current fisheries closed areas.
- Additional management controls could be implemented to better manage inshore fisheries.
- Essentially a 'business as usual' scenario.

4 CONSULTATION RESPONSE *PRO-FORMA*

The Department welcomes your responses to the following questions along with any additional comments you consider may be of relevance.

Please tell us which sector you affiliate to:-

- Catching ☐
- Processing ☐
- Conservation/environmental protection ☐
- Recreational fishing ☐
- Other tourism/recreation/leisure use ☐
- Fisheries manager ☐
- Fisheries policy ☐
- UK Fisheries Administration ☐
- Other (please specify) ☐
- None/private individual ☐

Details:-

Question 1 – Do you support the principle of introducing an inshore marine zoning plan for the 0-3 M area of the Isle of Man territorial sea?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Question 2 – If you answered a) (Yes), how long should an inshore marine zoning plan be in place before it is reviewed to consider progress and possible extension, revision or cancellation?

a) 3 years ☐

b) 5 years ☐

c) 10 years ☐

d) Other ☐

Please give a reason for your answer

Question 3 – Do you think that mobile fishing gear effort should be excluded, reduced, or remain the same in the 0-1 M as part of an inshore marine zoning plan?

a) Excluded ☐

b) Reduced ☐

c) Remain the same ☐

Please give reasons for your answer;

If you selected 'Excluded', then you are tending towards option 1 (model 1) (figure 1)

If you selected 'Reduced', then you are tending towards option 2 (model 2) (figure 2)

If you selected 'Remain the same', then you are tending towards option 3 (maintain current arrangements)

Question 4 – Other than using Fisheries Management Zones (blue areas) what additional or alternative measures could be used to manage access and fishing effort in the 0-1 M?

Please provide details, as clearly and concisely as possible, in the box provided:

Question 5 – What measures could be introduced in the 1-3 M Restricted Licence Fishery Area (orange) in respect of managing mobile gear fishing access and effort for scallop and queen scallop.

Please provide details, as clearly and concisely as possible, in the box provided:

Question 6 – Which of the potential options and two potential models do you prefer?

a) Option 1 simple model (model 1) ☐

b) Option 2 zoned model (model 2) ☐

c) Option 3 maintain current arrangements within the 0-3 M area ☐

Question 7 – The Department recognises that other options for zoned management are possible.
Do you wish to provide suggestions, modifications, or alternatives to the proposed models?

Please provide details, as clearly and concisely as possible, in the box provided:

Question 8 - If an inshore marine zoning plan is introduced for the 0-3 M, do you support the principle of designating a marine nature reserve to include the green (conservation and static) and blue (Fisheries Management Zones) areas?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

c) Only for specific areas ☐

Please specify which areas _____

5 HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS CONSULTATION

The purpose of this consultation is not a referendum, but an exercise to gather information, views and evidence on which an informed decision on changes would be made.

The Department welcomes representations by anyone who wishes to comment on this document and the consultation questions set out in Section 4 (Consultation Response *Pro Forma*). We would encourage the submission of clear and concise responses via the attached *pro forma*.

It should be noted that all comments and information may be made available for public viewing. We will assume, unless you notify us to the contrary, that you are content for your name and/or organisation to be published in any subsequent public review document.

Any queries in relation to this matter should be addressed to –

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Director of Fisheries
Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture
Thie Slieau Whallian
Foxdale Road
St John's
Isle of Man IM4 3AS

or karen.mcharg@gov.im

Response should be submitted no later than **17:00 hrs, Thursday May 19th, 2016.**

The Department maintains the right to publish responses unless explicitly requested otherwise by the consultee.

Anonymous responses will be disregarded.

6 APPENDIX 1 - LIST OF CONSULTEES

Individual owners of:
Isle of Man registered commercial fishing vessels

Fishermen's organisations:
Manx Fish Producers Organisation Ltd
Baie ny Carrickey Crustacean Fisheries Management Association

Seafood processors and related:
IOM Scallop Processors Association
Devereaux
Island Seafare
Isle of Man Seafood Products Ltd
C B Horne and Co.
Robinsons
Carrick Bay Seafoods

Environmental groups:
Manx Wildlife Trust
Manx Basking Shark Watch
Manx Whale & Dolphin Watch
Manx Society for Marine Conservation
SeaSearch Isle of Man
Friends of the Earth (IoM)
Manx Conservation Forum
Manx National Heritage
Society for the Preservation of Manx Countryside & the Environment
Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Marine-related businesses and recreational organisations
Anglers Forum
Isle of Man Angling Federation
Ramsey, Peel, Mannin Angling Clubs
Isle of Man Charter Skippers Association
Adventurous Experiences
7th Wave
Gemini Charter Angling
Discover Diving
Isle Of Man Sub Aqua Club
Isle of Man Aquaholics

Other:
All Members of Tynwald
Attorney General's Office
Local Authorities
Isle of Man Government Departments, Chief Officers
Law Society
DEFRA

- DARD
- Marine Scotland
- Welsh Assembly Government

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