

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



**Isle of Man
Government**

Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

Rheynn Chymmhtaght, Bee as Eirinys

Consultation Summary

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Part 1 Introduction

The Isle of Man territorial sea extends 12 nautical miles (M) from its coast within which various levels of marine resource management is exercised. The Isle of Man Fisheries Act 2012 is the primary legislation for fisheries management within the territorial sea and fisheries policy and management is largely directed by various agreements with the UK. Between 3-12 M, this is primarily under the Fisheries Management Agreement (FMA) 2012, but closer inshore, between 0-3 M, the FMA does not apply, and a greater degree of management authority and flexibility is assumed.

The Isle of Man Government has statutory responsibility for the management and protection of the marine environment, including for various species and habitats of conservation importance. Policy objectives are primarily domestically driven, but are influenced by international agreements to which the Isle of Man is signatory to, for example; OSPAR and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. The Wildlife Act 2009 is the primary legislation for these purposes.

Sustainable management and long-term economic benefit are the main fisheries objectives of the Isle of Man Government, with specific details outlined in the 5-year fisheries and marine environment strategy - *Future Fisheries*. Similarly, primary objectives for marine environmental conservation are outlined in the biodiversity strategy – *Managing our Natural Wealth*.

It is recognised that the inshore marine areas, within 3 M of the coast, have a disproportionate importance in relation to fisheries, conservation and recreation activities. Since this area also provides greater opportunity for autonomous management, it is considered fundamental to achieving the Government's long-term marine policy objectives.

Recent increases in mobile fishing effort and latent static-fishing effort are considered to represent significant threats to achieving sustainable fisheries and marine conservation. As such, the introduction of strategic approaches for long-term management of the 0-3 M area has been considered and it was recommended that DEFA sought the views of stakeholders on the introduction of a zoning approach to future inshore marine management.

The Minister for DEFA accepted this recommendation and agreed to a consultation process on the principles of a zoning plan.

Part 2 The consultation process

A consultation document was produced which included potential zoning models which had been developed following input from key stakeholders (see maps in Appendix 1). A public consultation process was undertaken between 7th April and 19th May 2016 to obtain views on the introduction of a zoning plan for the 0-3 M area of the territorial sea, possible future management options for the area, and the designation of a second marine nature reserve.

The consultation document was posted on the Government website, distributed via email to the DEFA consultation list, posted on social media and also communicated to the UK fisheries administrations;

- DEFRA (statutory nominee)
- Marine Scotland
- DARD (Northern Ireland)
- Welsh Assembly Government

The consultation was also presented at 4 public meetings/drop-in sessions in Ramsey, Port St Mary, Peel and St John's. A Government press release was made, and the consultation process was covered by the BBC, Manx radio and other media organisations.

At the close of the consultation, a total of 50 responses had been received, one of which (from the Manx Fish Producers Organisation) represented the combined views of 88 individuals from the catching, processing and associated fishing industry. The results presented in this summary include the MFPO response as a single view, whilst acknowledging the relative weighting of that opinion. Other organisational submissions have been similarly treated.

The results of all responses for each question are summarised below, noting that not all responses are necessarily represented for each question, e.g. where no answer was provided.

Part 3 Responses

Respondents were asked to identify which sector they affiliated with.

Of the 50 responses received, the sectors represented, or identified with were as follows;

| RESPONSES | SECTOR |
|--------------------------|--|
| 5 (incl. 92 individuals) | Fishing Industry (catching, processing, related) |
| 16 | Conservation/ Environmental Protection |
| 13 | Recreational Fishing |
| 11 | Private individual |
| 4 | Tourism/Recreation/Leisure |
| 4 | Local government/Political/Government Dept. |
| 2 | UK fisheries administration |
| 1 | Other (Utilities Company) |

Notes:

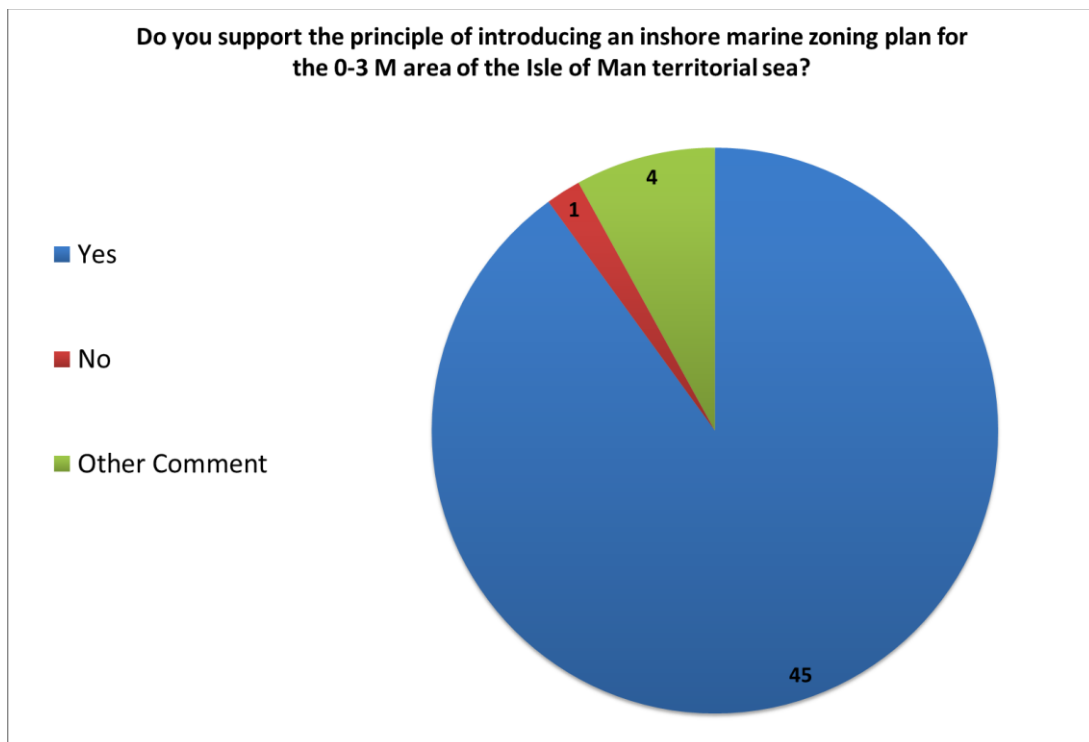
- Some respondents identified with more than one sector/category.
- The MFPO response represented 88 individuals (25 vesselowners, 57 vessel crew, 5 fishing industry members and 1 fishing industry representative).

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

Responses

Of the 50 respondents to the consultation, 45 (90%) were in favour of introducing an inshore marine zoning plan, 1 (2%) was against this idea and 4 (8%) provided an alternative response or no comment.



Additional comment related to this question;

- Two respondents did not specifically answer the question, but were inferred as positives based on subsequent responses.

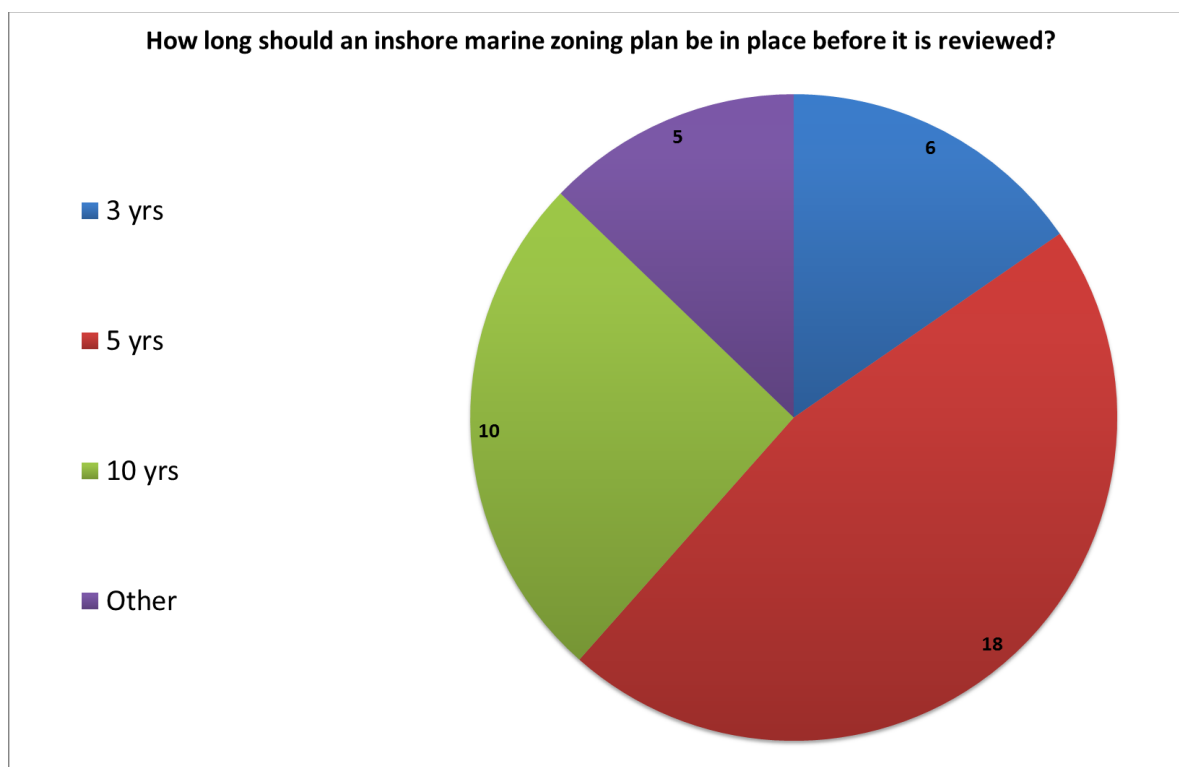
Question 2 - How long should an inshore marine zoning plan be in place before it is reviewed to consider progress and possible extension, revision or cancellation?

Those respondents who answered **YES** to question 1 were asked to respond to the above question, with potential answers as follows;

- a) 3 years
- b) 5 years
- c) 10 years
- d) Other

Responses

Of the 41 who responded; 6 (15%) supported 3 years, 18 (44%) supported 5 years, 10 (24%) supported 10 years and 5 (12%) indicated an alternative view. A further 1 (2%) indicated 3-5 year reference, and 1 (2%) indicated a 5-10 year preference.



Additional comments received in response to this question included;

- Annual review suggested.
- Zoning introduced and permanently in place, but with potential for modification.
- Adaptable and responsive zoning plan introduced, able to respond to changes.
- Review should be based on scientific data, and a monitoring programme should occur to inform reviews.
- Modify model 1 to a 0.5 M exclusion initially and extend to 1 M after 3-year review.

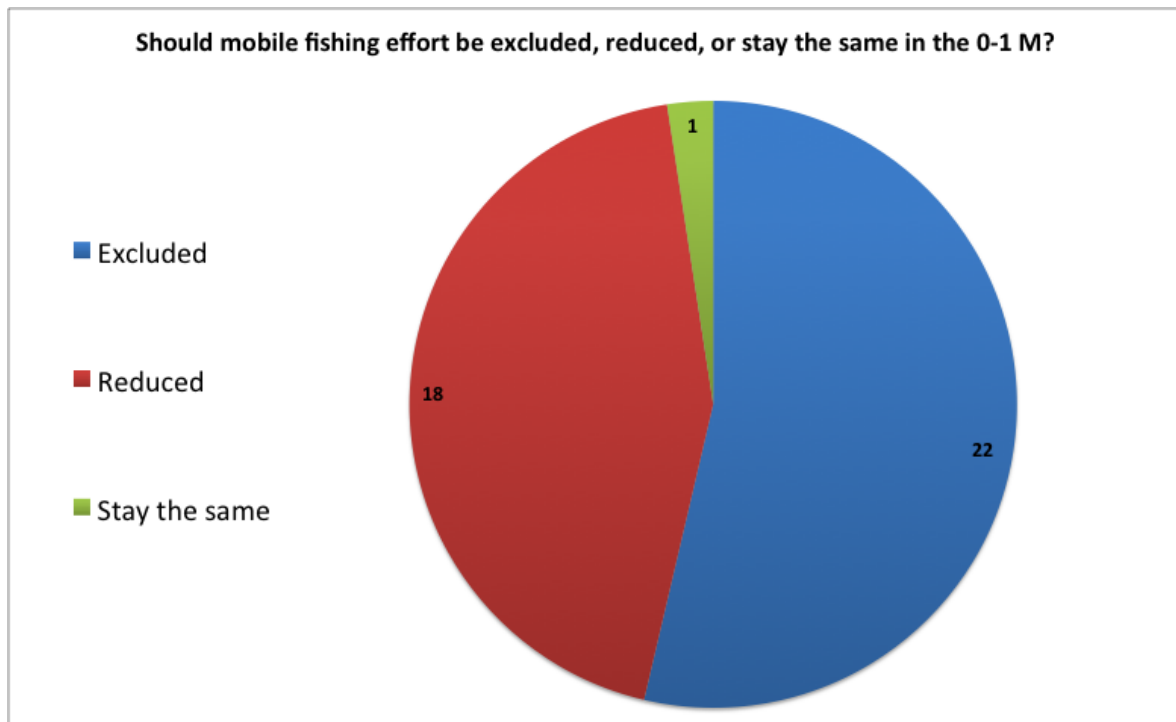
Question 3 – Do you think that mobile fishing gear effort should be excluded, reduced, or remain the same in the 0-1 M as part of an inshore marine zoning plan?

This question was intended to provide an indication of what respondents felt should be the main objective for future management of mobile fishing effort within the 0-1 M area.

Responses

Of the 43 responses; 22 (51%) indicated a preference for exclusion of mobile fishing in the 0-1 M, 18 (42%) preferred a reduction and 1 (2%) thought that effort should remain the same. A further 2 (5%) respondents indicated that either a reduction or exclusion of mobile

fishing would be acceptable, depending on associated conditions. Note: as indicated previously, the MFPO response, representing 88 individuals, but shown here as a single response, indicated a preference for 'reduced effort'.



Additional comments received in response to this question included;

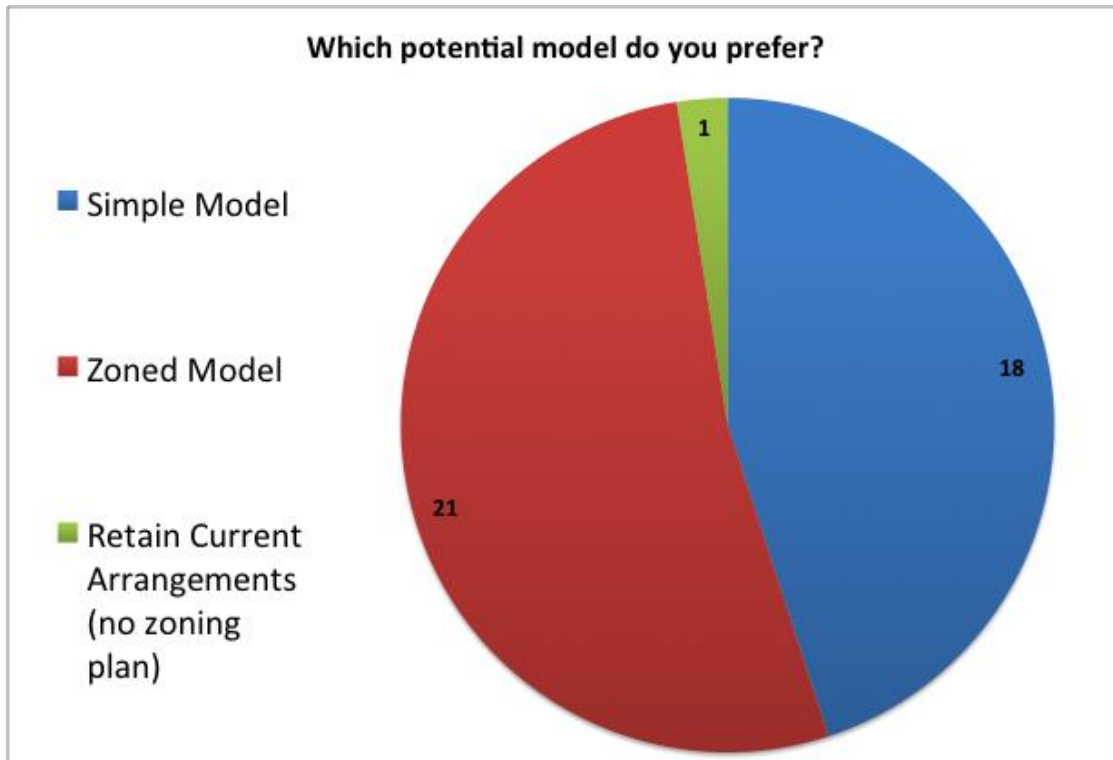
- Prioritise 0-1 M for smaller vessels, reduce larger vessel effort.
- Static gear effort would need effort control within 3 M if zoning introduced.

Note: Questions 4, 5 and 7 are summarised later in this document

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

Two potential models (*see Appendix 1*) were offered based on preliminary consultations and probable feasibility. A *status quo* (no change) option was also offered.

Of the 42 responses received for this question; 18 (43%) preferred the Simple Model (model 1), 21 (50%) preferred the Zoned Model (model 2), 1 (2%) preferred retaining current arrangements (no zoning plan) and 2 respondents (5%) indicated models 1 or 2 would be acceptable, under different conditions (see below). Note: as indicated previously, the MFPO response, representing 88 individuals, but shown here as a single response, indicated a preference for a 'zoned model'.

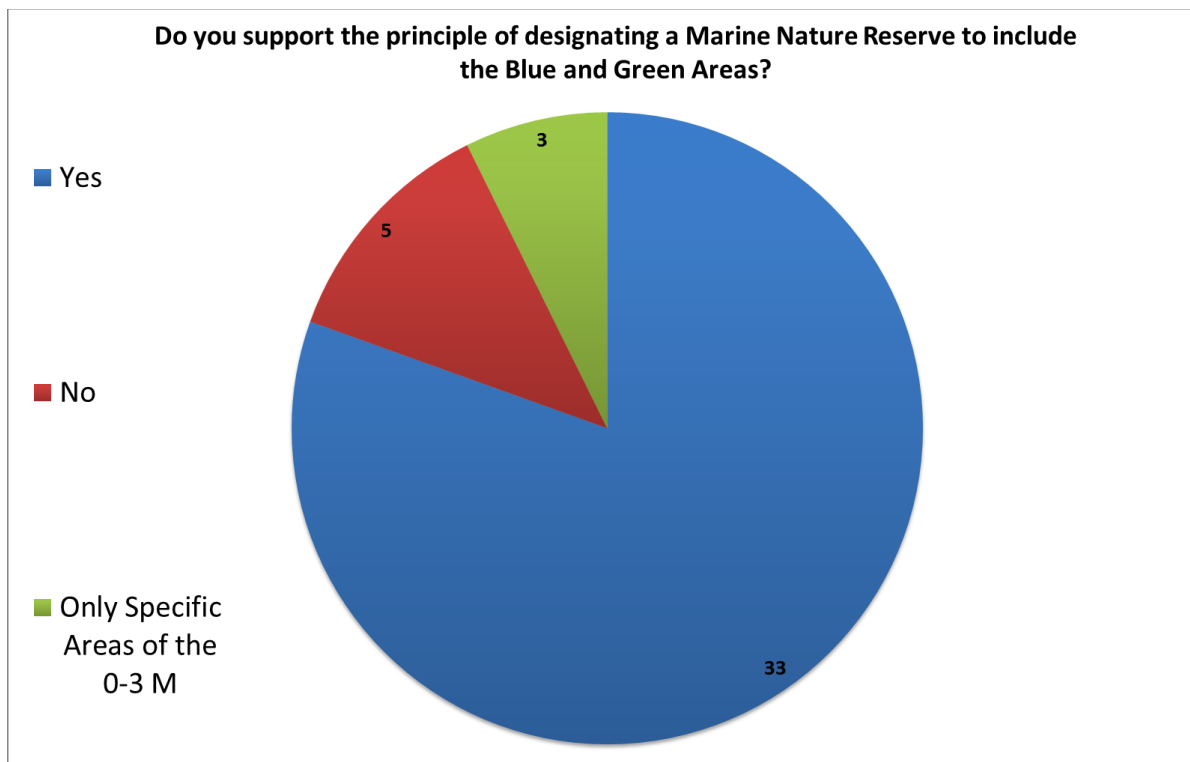


Additional comments received in response to this question included;

- The option of Model 1 (mobile exclusion from 1 M) could be considered but with exclusion from 0.5 M instead of 1 M.
- Model 1 was preferred, but model 2 would be acceptable under tightly controlled conditions relating to mobile effort and fishing management and a prioritisation of conservation and static fishing inshore.

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)?

Of the 41 responses received, 33 (80.5%) indicated support for a new marine nature reserve (MNR) encompassing the green and blue zones. Five (12%) did not support a marine reserve in these areas and 3 (7%) indicated that a reserve should include different areas than those proposed. Note: as indicated previously, the MFPO response, representing 88 individuals, but shown here as a single response, could not support the marine nature reserve proposal without additional details.



Additional comments received in response to this question included;

- Under Model 1, a MNR was considered unnecessary.
- Green areas only as a MNR.
- The whole 0-3 M area as a MNR.
- The MFPO did not support green and blue designation, without further details.

Questions 4, 5 and 7 requested further ideas about management within the 0-1 and 1-3 areas, as well as potential modifications to the models proposed.

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?

- Numerous comments supporting Manx-only fishing within 0-1, or 0-3 area.
- Significantly reduced numbers of vessels.
- Prioritise inshore areas for poor weather and/or smaller vessels.
- Rotational management areas to enable recovery and sustainable harvest.
- Higher level of management regulation closer inshore, e.g. reduced dredge number, engine power, vessel size, quotas, etc.
- Complete ban on commercial fishing, and used for recreational and conservation purposes only.

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.

- Many similar comments as for 0-1 M (see above).
- High-level track record for non-Manx vessels to qualify within 0-3.
- No nomadic vessels inside 3 M – only those with long-term commitment to island.
- Compulsory landing of product for on-island processing or payment of harvest fees to ensure all fishing contributes something to Manx economy.
- Stricter monitoring and enforcement of inshore fishing, including static gear; introduction of VMS or equivalent in all commercial vessels, gear in/out technology etc.
- Establishment of an inshore management committee to better manage and balance inshore activities.
- Recover and develop inshore finfish fisheries.
- Science-based catch limits within territorial sea, but starting in inshore areas.

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?

- Seasonal basking shark and cetacean awareness/protection areas.
- Buffer zones to protect sensitive fishing (nursery/spawning) or conservation areas.
- Manage 0-12 M holistically; considering effects of 0-3 M changes in relation to 0-12 M management.
- More of west coast as green (static and conservation).
- Link zoning to UN biosphere project.
- No-take zones within MNR/green zones.
- Use boundaries of zones to help protect important national infrastructure assets such as electricity supply cables from potential disturbance and damage.
- Tougher enforcement for inshore areas; e.g. removal of licence for infringements (one or two 'strike' policy), public reporting of illegal fishing.

Part 4 Summary

- Majority support for the introduction of an inshore zoning plan.
- A review period of 5 years for an onshore zoning plan is favoured.
- Majority support for a reduction or exclusion of mobile fishing within 1 M.
- More stringent controls on mobile gear fishing and enforcement within 3 M in general.
- New management controls need to consider implications for whole of territorial sea.
- A zoned model (model 2) is marginally favoured.
- Overall majority support for a marine nature reserve within the green and blue areas of the 0-3 M (with further discussion required).

Appendix 1

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



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

