

Have your say - before 20th July 2018

Six-week Public Consultation on the **third tranche** of **Marine Conservation Zones** to complete the network **One simple letter to help protect our seas**



Now is your chance to make a difference and ensure our local Marine Conservation Zones are designated and protected. The Government wants to hear your views.

Signing a petition is very valuable, but writing a short letter in your own words can have even greater impact, demonstrating how much you value the health of your local seas. **So do please take a few minutes to make your views *really* count.**

You can follow the guidance below to write a short letter, explaining why you feel your local sites should be designated as Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and protected from damaging activities. You don't need to be a scientist or a fisherman to write a letter in this consultation; the government wants to know what the general public think about protecting our seas.

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Simply write something in your own words and send it off to Defra, by post or e-mail (see over).

Paragraph 1

Tell Defra **why the sea is important to you/what you enjoy about the sea.**

Mention any MCZs that you know or feel strongly about. The local site highlights overleaf give you information, or visit www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/MCZs

Paragraph 2

Support the **designation of all 41 MCZs** listed in the consultation - including four in Kent: Goodwin Sands, Kentish Knock, Foreland and Swanscombe.

Welcome the protection of all the additional features proposed for existing MCZs, including those in Dover to Deal MCZ, Thanet MCZ, and Medway MCZ.

Paragraph 3

Ask the Government to **stay committed to completing a full network of protected areas at sea.**

Stress that the network must include examples of all our marine wildlife habitats.

Ask them to fill the gap in protection for subtidal mud in this region - left by the worrying omission of Hythe Bay from the consultation.



Have your say on Marine Conservation Zones before 20th July

Support the designation of four beautiful Kent MCZs included in the Government's Public Consultation.

Send a letter by email: MCZ@defra.gsi.gov.uk (remember to include your address & postcode)

or by post: MCZ Team, Defra, Seacole 1st Floor, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF

If you find yourself out of time to write a letter, please take a moment to support The Wildlife Trusts' on-line campaign at www.wildlifetrusts.org/waveofsupport

Goodwin Sands



A vital site in the national network, particularly as its habitats straddle two regional sea areas (North Sea and Eastern Channel) and cover both inshore and offshore waters.

Consultation proposes **6 features for protection:**

3 broad habitat types (sand, coarse sediment and rock)

2 key habitats: mussel beds and rossworm reefs

1 geological feature (Channel outburst flood feature)

Massive rolling sandbanks, parts of which dry out at low tide, allowing grey and harbour seals to haul out and rest. The diversity of marine life attracts predatory fish which seals come to hunt. Beds of blue mussels and ross worms reefs provide habitat for other wildlife, and foraging birds abound.

Foreland



Lying in the Dover Strait along the border with French waters, this is an important site of offshore sediment and rock habitats supporting a wide diversity of species.

Consultation proposes **5 features for protection:**

4 broad habitat types (exposed and sheltered subtidal rock habitats, sand and coarse sediment)

1 geological feature (Channel outburst flood feature)

Deeply gouged channels and wildlife-rich rocky habitats occur beside impressive sand wave features, where sand eels and hermit crabs are found.

Swanscombe



An important, but very small, part of the original Thames Estuary recommended MCZ, this site protects key features.

Consultation proposes **2 features for protection:**

1 broad habitat type (intertidal mud)

1 key species (tentacled lagoon worm)

Intertidal mud supports the rare and vulnerable tentacled lagoon worm and many more species vital for the Thames to sustain its all-important populations of juvenile fish.

Kentish Knock East



An offshore site between Kent and Essex, contributing important mixed sediment habitats to the network.

Consultation proposes **3 features for protection:**

3 broad habitat types (subtidal sand, coarse and mixed sediment)

Sand, gravel and pebble expanses, with a rich diversity of animals living on and within the seabed.

Welcome additional features proposed for protection in existing MCZs:

Thanet Coast MCZ—Stalked jellyfish
Haliclystus sp.

Medway Estuary MCZ—Smelt (fish)

Dover to Deal MCZ—Mussel beds, subtidal rock, rossworm reefs.



Major concerns

• Omission of **Hythe Bay** and its highly biodiverse subtidal mud habitats, despite an acknowledged large gap in the network for this type of habitat.

• Significant reduction in the size of area to be protected in the highly important **Thames Estuary**.

• Additional features promised for **Dover to Folkestone MCZ** have not been proposed, including rare and fragile habitats like subtidal chalk, clay and rossworm reefs.

