Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) Stage 1 Assessment

Environment Agency record of assessment (Stage 1, Part 1)

Stage 1 assessment: Part 1 - Is there a significant risk of hindering the conservation objectives?

This is a record of the assessment of the risk of the PPP (detailed in section 1) hindering the achievement of the conservation objectives for the MCZ(s). It is to meet our duties under Sections 125-126 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. If there is, or may be, a significant risk, this record is used to notify Natural England. The Marine Conservation Zone assessed is:

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ

Orford Inshore MCZ

This record was sent to Natural England.

An additional component charge for habitats assessment was not levied for this application.

1. Permission, plan or project (PPP) details

Type of PPP: Net Limitation Orders (NLO)

Environment Agency reference: n/a

Location: Coast of Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex. See map (section 3)

Site/project name or reference: Anglian Coastal Net Limitation Order 2024

2. Description of proposal

The Anglian Coast (Limitation of Net Licences) Order 1994 was issued to manage the reduction of net licences issued for taking salmon and sea trout on the Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex coast. It came into operation on 1 January 1996, and was renewed in 2005 and in 2015. The intention is to replace the 2015 NLO with a new reducing NLO with identical provisions - licences are restricted to those already operating in the net fishery, and as current licensees retire, the number of licences is reduced.

3. Maps showing extent of NLO and location of Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds and Orford Inshore MCZs

Figure 1: Extent of the Anglian NLO boundary

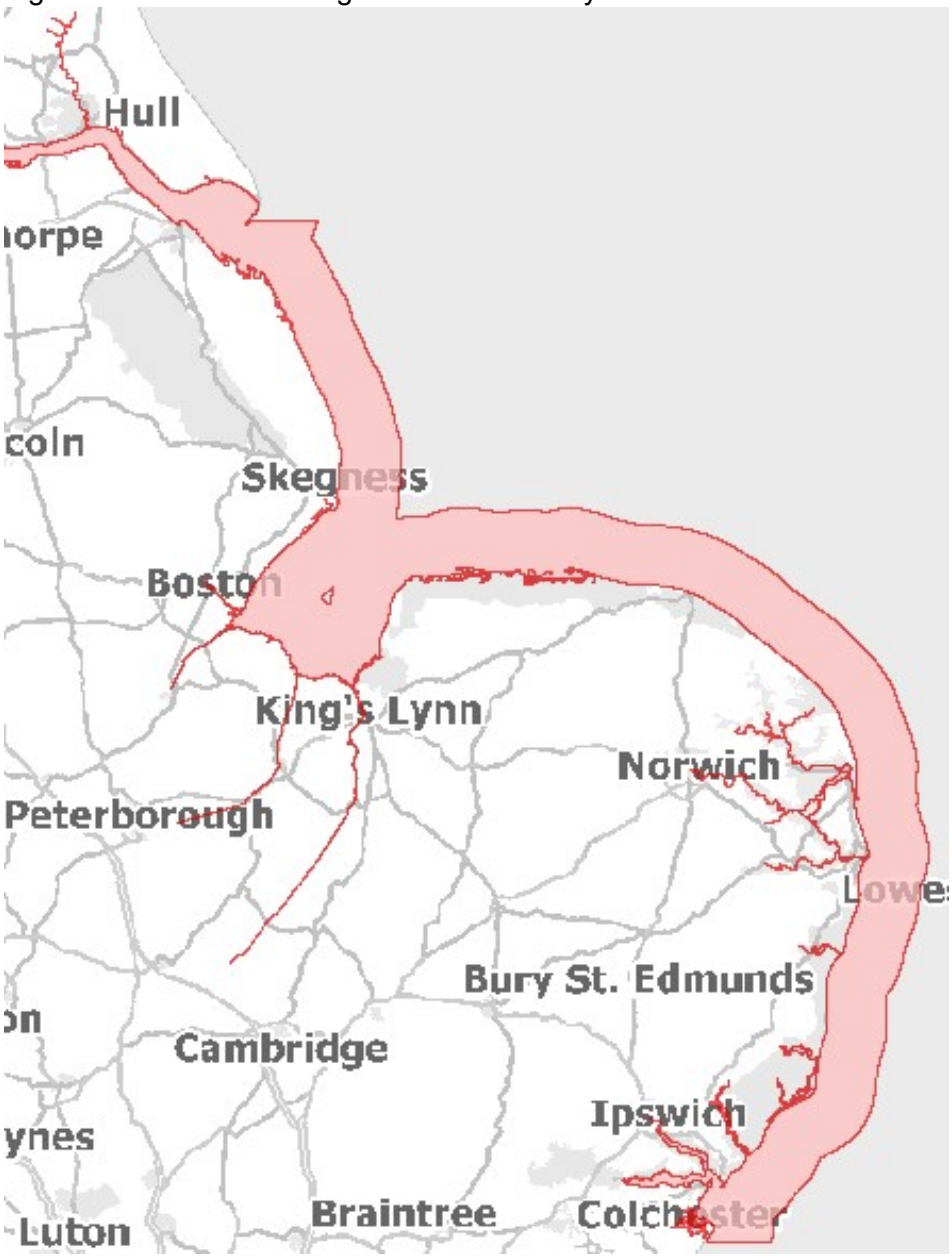
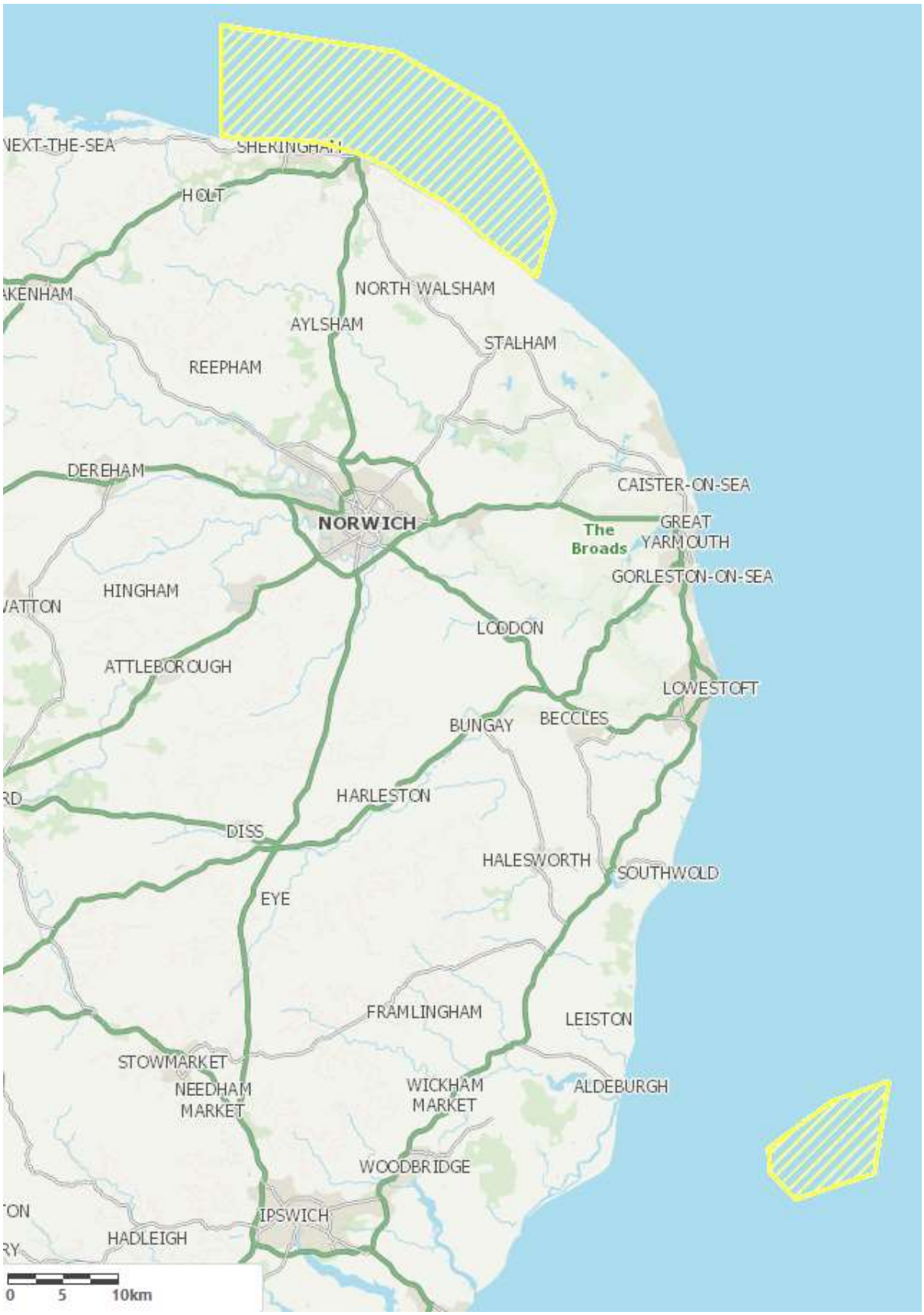


Figure 2: Location of Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ and Orford Inshore MCZ (potentially affected by the NLO)



4. MCZs requiring assessment

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ
Feature(s):
North Norfolk Coast assemblages of subtidal sediment features and habitats; Peat and clay exposures; high energy infralittoral rock; Moderate energy infralittoral rock; Subtidal chalk; Subtidal coarse sediment; Subtidal mixed sediments; Subtidal sand; High energy circalittoral rock; Moderate energy circalittoral rock.

Orford Inshore MCZ
Feature(s):
Subtidal mixed sediments

5. Conservation objectives

The assessment will consider the risk of significantly hindering the site's conservation objectives.

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ Marine site detail (naturalengland.org.uk) and Designated Sites View (naturalengland.org.uk)

Orford Inshore MCZ Marine site detail (naturalengland.org.uk) and Designated Sites View (naturalengland.org.uk)

6. Risks (pressures) relevant to the type of PPP being assessed

This is the reasonably foreseeable risk for this type of PPP in relation to the features of the two MCZs:

- **Physical damage**

Netting occurs within the fishery via two different methods:

- Drift Netting
- Beach Seine Netting

Drift Netting

Drift nets are designed to enmesh fish and comprise a plain sheet of netting attached to a head rope with floats along the top, and to a weighted footrope along the bottom. A drift net should float and drift freely with the tide, unimpeded by any weights other than those forming the lead line. The Anglian fishermen use drift nets of up to 300 metres in length and a mesh size of 10 centimetres. Drift nets are normally set at right angles to the line of the coast. Fish are usually caught in drift

nets either by swimming into a mesh and becoming wedged or by becoming snagged or tangled in the netting, see Figure 3.

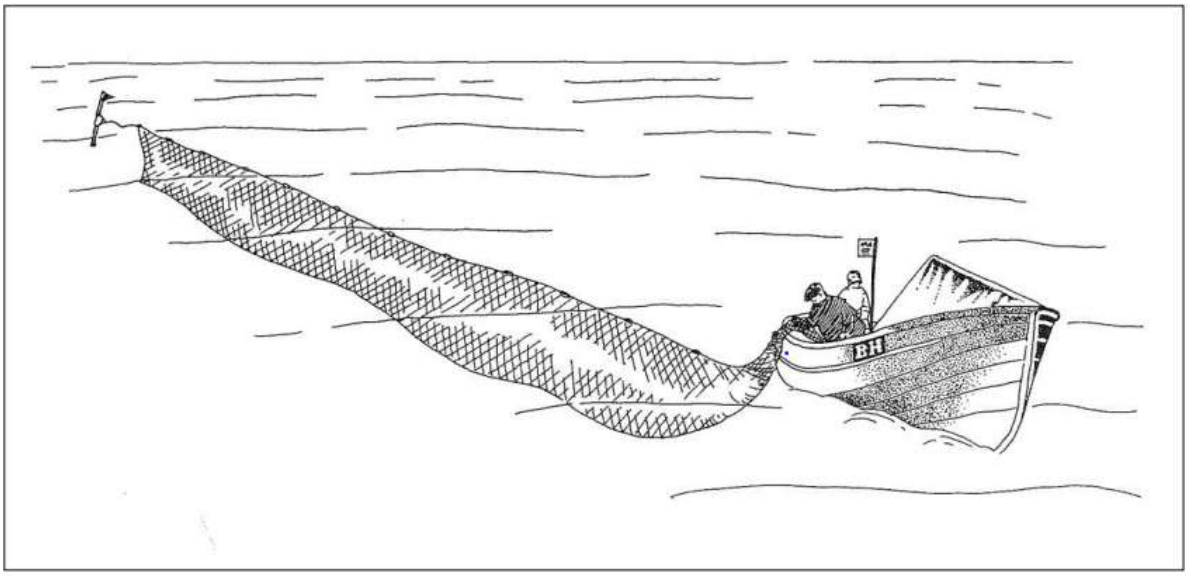


Figure 3. Diagram of a typical drift net (from Salmon Net Fisheries Report (1991) MAFF and Scottish Office)

Beach Seine Netting

Beach seine nets are operated close to the shore. The net used is of similar dimensions to a drift net, it is rowed out from the beach and set in a semi circle. The fish are encircled and captured by pulling the net carefully onto the beach, see Figure 4.

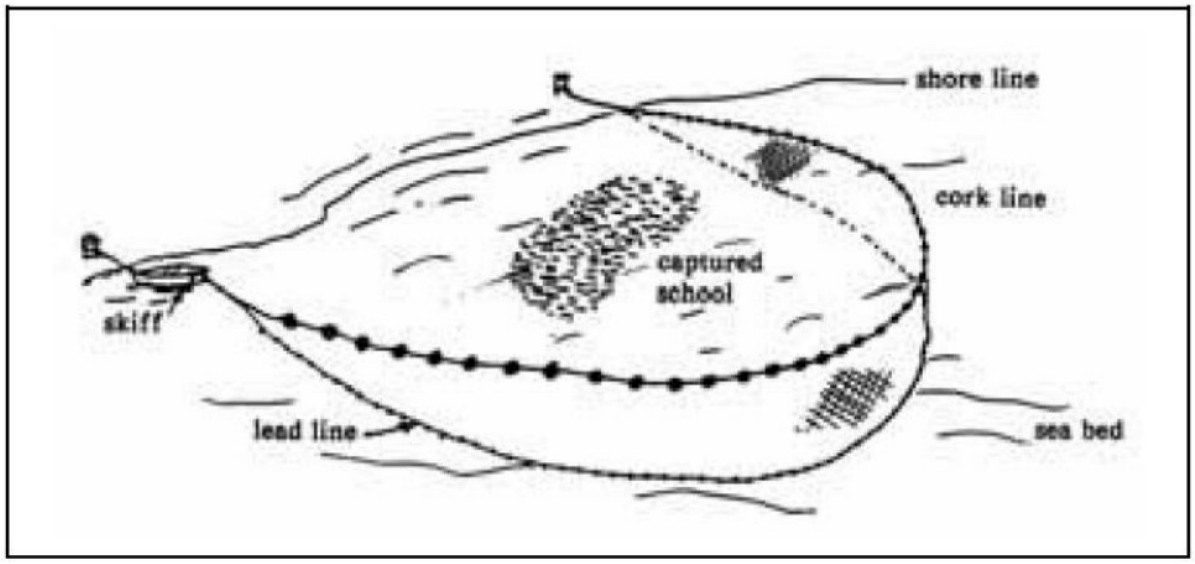


Figure 4. Schematic of a beach seine operation (FAO, Fishing Gear chapter in a review of Marine, Estuarine and Lagunar Artisanal Fisheries in the Western Mediterranean)

7. MCZ Assessment

This section is a record of the screening for each risk (pressure) and the qualifying features that could be sensitive to that risk. The features may be grouped if they will be affected in the same way and the screening is the same for each feature. If appropriate, the assessment may be considered at a site level, rather than feature by feature.

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ

Physical damage from drift netting
Drift netting does not interact with the seabed and as such there can be no impact on the features of this site.

Physical damage from beach seine netting
The boundary of the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ begins 200m out from the mean low water mark. As a result, beach seine netting is highly unlikely to reach the MCZ itself. As a result there can be no impact on the features of this site.

Orford Inshore MCZ
Physical damage from drift netting
Drift netting does not interact with the seabed and as such there can be no impact on the features of this site.

Physical damage from beach seine netting
Site is 14km offshore and as such there can be no impact on the features of this site.

8. Information / Advice (if applicable)

This section summarises the information and/or advice requested/received during the assessment.

Environment Agency internal advice and consultation (if applicable)

Consultation has occurred with National Fisheries, Area FBG and National Biodiversity.

Natural England information / advice (if applicable)

Consultation has occurred with:

Shannon McCloskey	Natural England	Marine Lead Advisor
Jennifer Love	Natural England	

Third party information / advice (if applicable)

n/a

9. References

n/a

10. Decision

The Environment Agency concludes that there is no significant risk of hindering the achievement of the conservation objectives of the Marine Conservation Zone.

Name of Environment Agency officer: Rob Dyer

Job title: Team Leader, Fisheries Biodiversity and Geomorphology (Norfolk)

Date: 20 June 2024

Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) Stage 1 Assessment

Environment Agency record of assessment (Stage 1, Part 2)

Stage 1 assessment: Part 2 - Are there other means of proceeding that would create a substantially lower risk?

This is a record of the assessment of whether there are other means of proceeding that would create a substantially lower risk. It is to meet our duties under Sections 125-126 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This record starts at Section 11 because it follows on from Stage 1, Part 1 which covers the assessment of whether there is a risk of hindering the achievement of the conservation objectives for the MCZ.

11. Assessment

None – The 2024 NLO replaces the 2015 NLO with a new reducing NLO with identical provisions - licences are restricted to those already operating in the net fishery, and as current licensees retire, the number of licences is reduced.

12. Decision

The Environment Agency are satisfied that there is no other means of proceeding with the PPP which would create a substantially lower risk of hindering the achievement of the conservation objectives.

Name of Environment Agency officer: Rob Dyer

Job title: Team Leader, Fisheries Biodiversity and Geomorphology (Norfolk)

Date: 20 June 2024

Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) Stage 1 Assessment

Environment Agency record of assessment (Consultation)

Stage 1 assessment: Consultation

This is a record of consultation on the assessment of the risk of the PPP (detailed in section 1) hindering the achievement of the conservation objectives for the MCZ(s). It is to meet our duties under Sections 125-126 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This record starts at Section 13 because it follows on from Stage 1, Part 2 which covers the assessment of whether there are other means of proceeding that would create a substantially lower risk.

13. Consultation

Date sent to Natural England: 20 June 2024

Date response received from Natural England: || Select date ||

Do Natural England have concerns about the assessment? || Yes / No ||

Do Natural England have concerns about the decision? || Yes / No ||

Natural England advice

Write here...

Name of Natural England officer:

Job title:

Date: || Select date ||