Scottish MPA Project

Management Options Paper

FAROE-SHETLAND SPONGE BELT NATURE CONSERVATION MARINE PROTECTED AREA

JULY 2014

JNCC developed the present paper to support discussions with stakeholders about the management of activities within this Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (MPA). The paper should only be considered a starting point for discussions around the ongoing process of developing any management necessary to deliver the conservation objectives of the designated features; the process will continue after site designation.

The paper does not attempt to cover all possible future activities and does not consider likely cumulative effects that could result from different types of activities being carried out within the MPA. However, it does consider a range of activities and developments considered to be taking place within the MPA at the point of writing, and focuses on where we consider there could be a risk of the protected features not achieving their conservation objectives.

The following documents provide further information about the protected features in terms of confidence in the evidence base and assessment of the MPA against the MPA Selection Guidelines and should be read alongside this Management Options Paper:

- Site Summary Document
- Data Confidence Assessment
- Detailed assessment against the MPA Selection Guidelines

The documents are all available at www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6479

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DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE FAROE SHETLAND SPONGE BELT MPA

1 Management Options Summary

This section summarises JNCC's management options for the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA. The options are being considered to eliminate or manage the risk of not meeting the conservation objective to conserve the protected features within the MPA. The full detail on these options is provided in the subsequent sections of the Management Options Paper. Discussions between sea users, scientists and managers will be needed to develop any subsequent management measures.

Activity	**Management options**
Fishing activity: Bottom contacting mobile gear (e.g. otter and beam trawling)	**No additional management:** There is a risk of not achieving the conservation objectives for **offshore subtidal sands and gravels** and **ocean quahog aggregations**. The conservation objective would not be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should not be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur (depths between 400 and 600m). **Reduce/limit pressures:** This option would reduce, but not entirely eliminate, the risk of not achieving the conservation objectives for **ocean quahog aggregations** and **offshore subtidal sands and gravels.** Appropriate management for ocean quahog could include restrictions on those gears considered to impact the species, such as scallop and hydraulic dredging. Appropriate management for offshore subtidal sands and gravels could include a zoned approach where management measures are introduced to protect specific depth corridors representative of the range of sedimentary communities on the continental slope. The depth corridors selected would need to take into consideration management proposed within the other MPAs on the continental slope, to ensure that the depth-based variation of sedimentary communities is adequately represented within all the managed zones. There may be a greater requirement for restrictions on gears that penetrate deeply into the sediment. Restrictions could be permanent in some cases or temporary/adaptive in others. The location of areas to be covered by management restrictions would be decided in consultation with fishers. The conservation objective would not be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should not be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur. **Remove/avoid pressures:** This option would reduce the risk of not achieving the conservation objectives for **ocean quahog aggregations** and **offshore subtidal sands and gravels** to the lowest possible levels. This is the only option that would allow the conservation

	objective to be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend this option is applied to those areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur.
Fishing activity: Bottom contact static gear (e.g. line fishing and set netting)	**No additional management**: This option is considered to be sufficient for bottom contacting static gear to achieve the conservation objectives for **ocean quahog aggregations** and **offshore subtidal sands and gravels**. The conservation objective would not be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should not be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur. **Remove/avoid pressure:** This is the only option that would achieve the conservation objective for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option is applied in those areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur.
Oil and gas activity	The potential impacts of oil and gas activity on the protected features within the MPA will be assessed through the existing EIA process on a case-by-case basis. Early dialogue with DECC and JNCC would help identify and resolve any issues at an early stage.
Telecommunication cables	Early discussions between JNCC and the operator would be welcomed for all plans relating to cables within the MPA, including installation, maintenance and removal. It is recommended that a voluntary Environmental Impact Assessment is undertaken to support plans for any new cable installation to assess the impacts of the associated activities on the protected features present.

2 Introduction

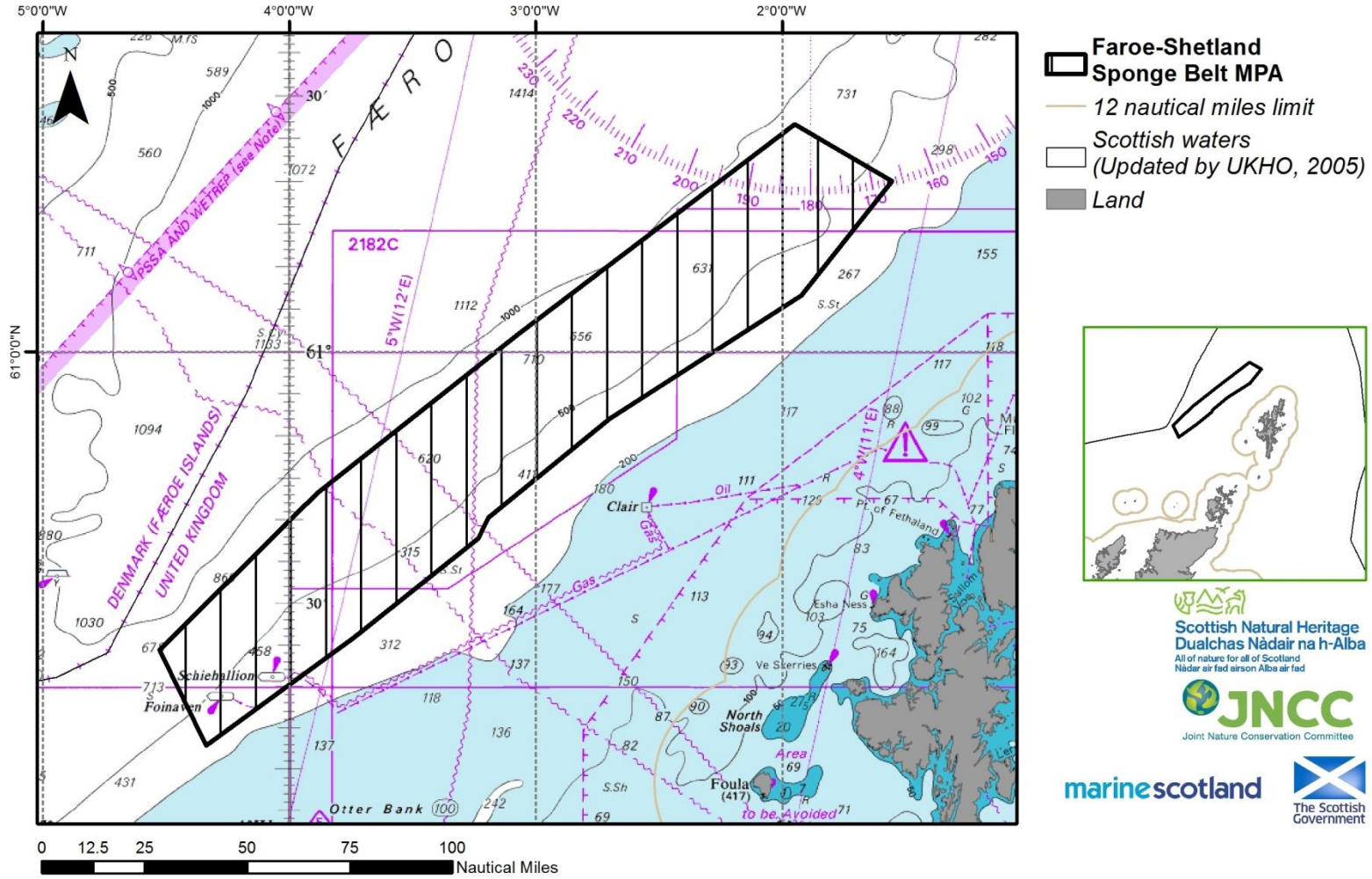
The Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt Marine Protected Area (MPA) falls on the Scottish side of the Faroe Shetland Channel, a huge rift basin to the north of Scotland that separates the Scottish and Faroese continental shelves (see Map 1). The currents in the channel drive the diversity of marine life, including fields of slow-growing deep-sea sponge aggregations. The seabed within the MPA is characterised by iceberg 'ploughmarks', scars in the seabed caused by the scouring action of icebergs during past glacial ice ages. The environmental conditions change as the seabed descends into the deep-sea supporting different types of animal communities. For example, the offshore subtidal sands and gravel habitats are home to the ocean quahog, a large and slow growing clam that is one of the oldest living animals on Earth. The area of the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA is approximately 5,278 km^2.

Further details on the MPA can be found in the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA Site Summary Document available at www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6479

The main fishing activity within the MPA is concentrated in two main zones; the upper slope fishery (100-300m) targets monkfish, ling and tusk, and the deeper (>400m) fishery targets Greenland halibut, redfishes and grenadiers. While an industrialised mixed trawl fishery for European shelf species has been active for many decades, the deep-water demersal otter trawl fishery was first developed by French vessels in the early 1990s. A small number of Scottish vessels also now exploit the fishery but market most of their catch overseas. Static gear fishing also takes place within the MPA, including long-lining and a gill net fishery that is mostly conducted in waters below 200m depth, targeting monkfish. Vessel Monitoring System data suggests a multi-national fleet operates within the MPA, including vessels from a number of EU countries, as well as Norway and the Faroe Islands. Two telecommunication cables cut through the MPA, and oil and gas wells, platforms, pipelines and associated infrastructure are also present. A large part of the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA also overlaps with an area identified by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) with potential for further oil and gas activity, and so may be subject to further development in the future.

JNCC produced the present document to provide background information on the development of management options for the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA, and will use it to support ongoing stakeholder discussions. The document describes the known location and extent of protected features and our current knowledge of where activities take place within the MPA. It also presents the management options for each of those activities that JNCC currently consider capable of delivering the conservation objectives for protected features. The document encourages stakeholders with an interest in the area to input to the development of appropriate management measures that will ensure the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA makes a genuine and long-lasting contribution to the protection of Scotland's marine environment.

Map 1 Location of the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA



Map projected in Mercator (World) projection, geographic coordinate system WGS1984. The exact limits of the UK Continental Shelf are set out in the Continental Shelf (Designation of Areas) Order 2013, Statutory Instrument 2013/3162 (© Crown Copyright). Landmass, Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright and database right 2011. All rights reserved. Scotland (Adjacent waters) Updated by the Law of the Sea Division, United Kingdom Hydrographic Office October 2005. MPA © JNCC and SNH, 2014. All rights reserved. Admiralty Chart © Crown Copyright, 2013. All rights reserved. License No. EK001-20130405.
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

3 Roles

JNCC provides conservation advice to Scottish Government on how it might be possible to achieve the conservation objectives for the protected features. JNCC's advice includes possible management options for controlling human activities in the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA.

Marine Scotland lead the discussions on developing appropriate management with stakeholders, taking account of JNCC's and others' advice, identify the preferred management option and develop specific management measures with relevant authorities. Marine Scotland is responsible for making recommendations to Scottish Ministers on these measures and any review of site management in the future. Scottish Ministers will decide whether to implement these measures. Marine Scotland expect that licensed activities taking place within, or nearby, the MPA will continue to be managed through the existing licensing system. For MPAs in offshore waters, Marine Scotland expect the process under Common Fisheries Policy that is already in place for delivering any fisheries management requirements for Special Areas of Conservation will be followed.

Stakeholders can provide additional evidence to support the development of management measures including local knowledge of the environment and of activities. Discussions with stakeholders will be one way of highlighting the implications of any management measures to JNCC, Scottish Government, and other regulators. This input will contribute to the development of well-designed and effective management measures.

4 Protected features and conservation objectives

The Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA is being considered as part of a network of new Nature Conservation MPAs, which is being established to help conserve a range of Scotland's important marine habitats, wildlife, geology and landforms. The Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA is designated for the following protected features, as shown in Map 2:

- Ocean quahog aggregations
- Deep-sea sponge aggregations
- Offshore subtidal sands and gravels
- Continental slope*
- Geodiversity interests* – continental slope channels, iceberg ploughmark fields, prograding wedges, slide deposits, sand wave fields and sediment wave fields.

* The continental slope and geodiversity features (excluding the iceberg ploughmarks) are all considered to have a low sensitivity to the pressures associated with marine activities taking place within the MPA. Consequently, JNCC consider there is no significant risk to the features achieving their conservation objectives and so the features have not been considered further in the context of the management options presented below.

The sediment and sand wave fields represent features under the Marine Geomorphology of the Deep Ocean Seabed Geodiversity Block. These features are predominantly formed by the action of deep ocean currents. Providing current patterns and flow rates are maintained, these features are likely to be maintained over time even if subject to local physical disturbance[1].

The iceberg ploughmark fields feature overlaps with the distribution of offshore subtidal sands and gravels in the MPA. It is considered that the management options presented for offshore subtidal sands and gravels will be similar to those that would be appropriate for

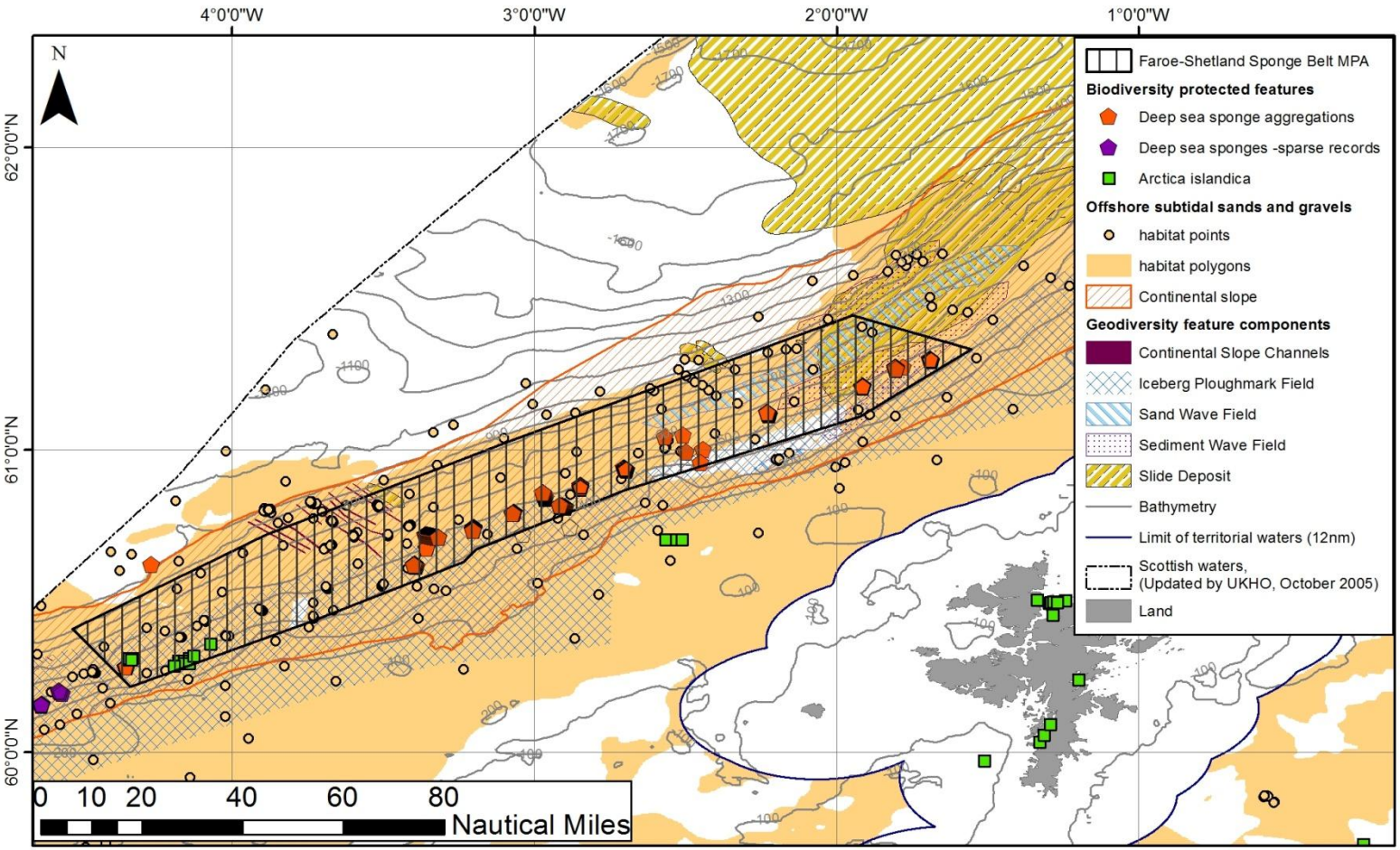
[1] Brooks, A.J., (2013). Assessing the sensitivity of geodiversity features in Scotland's seas to pressures associated with human activities. *Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 590.*

these geodiversity interests. Consequently, the geodiversity feature has not been reported further in the context of the management options presented below.

Conservation objectives set out the desired quality of the protected features within each MPA. JNCC recommend that the conservation objectives for the protected features within the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA are '*conserve'* for all features. The condition of the features has not been verified by direct evidence of their condition so the uncertainty of the feature condition is noted alongside the objective (feature condition uncertain).

Improved evidence on the condition of these features will be collected as part of the six-year reporting cycle required under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, or through provision of other evidence, may result in modifications to JNCC's recommendations for management to achieve the features' conservation objectives.

Map 2 The distribution of protected features within the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA



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5 Overview of activities

Table 1 below lists the activities[2] that JNCC believe are taking place within or close to the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA. Further discussions with those who use the area are required to improve our understanding of these activities (e.g. distribution and intensity etc.).

Those activities to which the protected features are sensitive are explored in detail in the next section. Activities to which the protected features are not thought to be sensitive (i.e. any interaction between the activity and the protected features is considered to be minimal) will not be considered further within this document. Any future change in the activities listed in Table 1, or the introduction of other activities not identified within the table would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis should they occur to establish the appropriate management actions.

Table 1: Overview of existing activities believed to take place within or close to the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA

Activities considered capable of affecting the protected features	**Activities *not* considered capable of affecting the protected features**
Fishing activity: - Beam trawling - Line fishing - Otter trawling - Set netting Licensed activities - Oil and gas industry developments, including drilling of wells, installation of platforms, pipelines and other subsea infrastructure, and their ongoing use and maintenance. Telecommunication cables	Shipping - Commercial shipping

6 Development of management options

JNCC developed management options for each MPA where we consider that some form of active management intervention may be necessary to achieve the conservation objective for each protected feature. We adopted a risk-based approach to identify appropriate management options i.e. our advice is focused where we believe there is a risk of the protected feature not achieving its conservation objective. We have used existing data and information on protected features and relevant activities, and also our understanding of the relationships between the protected features and activities. JNCC expect on-going discussions with stakeholders during the development of any management actions.

Our management options focus on the activities that cause a pressure to which a protected feature is sensitive. Pressures can be physical (e.g. abrasion of the seabed), chemical or biological. Different activities may cause the same pressure, e.g. fishing using bottom gears and aggregate dredging both cause surface abrasion which can damage the seabed although the scale and intensity of the pressure can vary between activities. Thus, the protected features of an MPA are considered sensitive to activities that could adversely

[2] Initial lists do not include <15 m vessel activity. Information on fishing activity from the <15 m fleet is not routinely recorded and we are keen to improve our understanding of relevant activity with this possible MPA through discussions with stakeholders

affect their conservation value, especially if they are unable or are very slow to recover from damage.

The Features Assessment Sensitivity Tool (FeAST) reflects our current understanding of the interactions between activities, pressures and features and supports the first steps of the assessment of risk that the features will not achieve their conservation objectives in the MPAs. The tool highlights that activities can give rise to a range of pressures, to which the protected features of the MPA may be sensitive. The online tool provides more detailed information including the evidence that has been used in developing these recommendations.

Risks to not achieving the conservation objectives have been identified for different management options where there is an overlap between protected features and activities associated with any pressures to which the features are sensitive. We have recommended management options to manage this risk. Specific details of the recommended management options for each activity are provided in the following sections. The overlap between different ongoing activities and/or planned developments and the protected features is described and where appropriate, mapped. The text focuses on interactions in terms of physical overlap but the assessment of risk in the future should also take account of the intensity and frequency of the activities occurring within, or nearby, the MPA.
JNCC identify the following three management options:

- no additional management required
- management to reduce/limit pressures
- management to remove/avoid pressures

All of the management options are based on the best available evidence of existing activities taking place within the MPA. The options do not preclude the introduction of a management measure in the future for new activities, or where an existing activity occurs at an increased intensity.

7 Management options

Management options have been considered by activity, please click on the activities below to be directed to the relevant section:

Fishing Activity
Mobile bottom contact gear

- Beam trawling
- Otter trawling

Static bottom contact gear

- Line fishing
- Set netting

Licensed activities

- Oil and gas activity and pipelines

Telecommunication cables

7.1 Fishing activity

JNCC has evaluated management options to manage the risk of not achieving the Conservation Objectives for the protected features of the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA. A gradient of management options has been considered to reduce exposure to pressures;

these have been described under three potential management options below. Protected features may require a combination of these options to ensure that they achieve their conservation objectives.

a) No additional management

b) Additional management to reduce/limit pressures – where fisheries managers may wish to consider a range of measures that could be used to reduce the risk to features by reducing fishing pressure or preventing its increase to unacceptably high levels. These options could include:

- Area restrictions (e.g. permanently closing some or the entire extent of the feature)
- Temporal restrictions (e.g. closing parts of the extent of the feature on a rotational basis)
- Seasonal restrictions
- Gear restrictions (e.g. restriction on the use of more damaging gears)

Ideally, any measures would generally apply only to the part of the site where the feature is present. However, there may be circumstances where it could be desirable to extend management measures beyond the known area of feature distribution, for example, where conditions are suitable for a feature to exist but there are insufficient data to confirm its presence.

c) Additional management to remove/avoid pressures – where those fishing activities known to adversely affect the feature would be excluded and prevented from occurring in the future. Such exclusion would generally apply only to the part of the site where the feature is present, unless it was necessary to apply to a wider are or even the whole MPA.

The likely effects on the feature condition and the risk to achieving the conservation objectives were assessed using the evidence described in the JNCC/SNH MPA fisheries management guidance.

An estimation of fishing activity taking place within the region of the MPA was derived from Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data, with an average 2 hourly ping rate. VMS data for UK vessels were linked to skipper logbook information, which was used to determine the fishing gear being employed for each ping. For non-UK registered vessels where logbook information was not available, information on fishing gear employed was obtained from the 'primary gear' listed on the EU vessel register. All data were filtered using a simple speed rule of between 1 and 6 knots to indicate fishing activity for all gear types. Between 2006 and 2009, generalised values for intensity of effort were estimated by aggregating VMS data to a 0.05 x 0.05 decimal degree grid. This gridding method has the advantage of enabling the quantification of effort at a discrete spatial scale (hours per unit area (grid resolution) per year), however, it precludes analysis of patterns of activity below the pre-defined resolution of the grid. As a result, individual "pings" were analysed for the period 2009 to 2011. To ensure anonymity of the data source, discrete VMS ping data is only presented in instances where it would not compromise the anonymity of an individual vessel (i.e. there are multiple vessels operating in the same area).

7.1.1 Mobile bottom contact gear

Beam trawling

According to VMS data, beam trawling effort is negligible across the MPA (i.e. fewer than 4 hours effort between 2006 and 2009 in any VMS grid cell potentially overlapping the protected features) as shown in Map 3.

Otter trawling

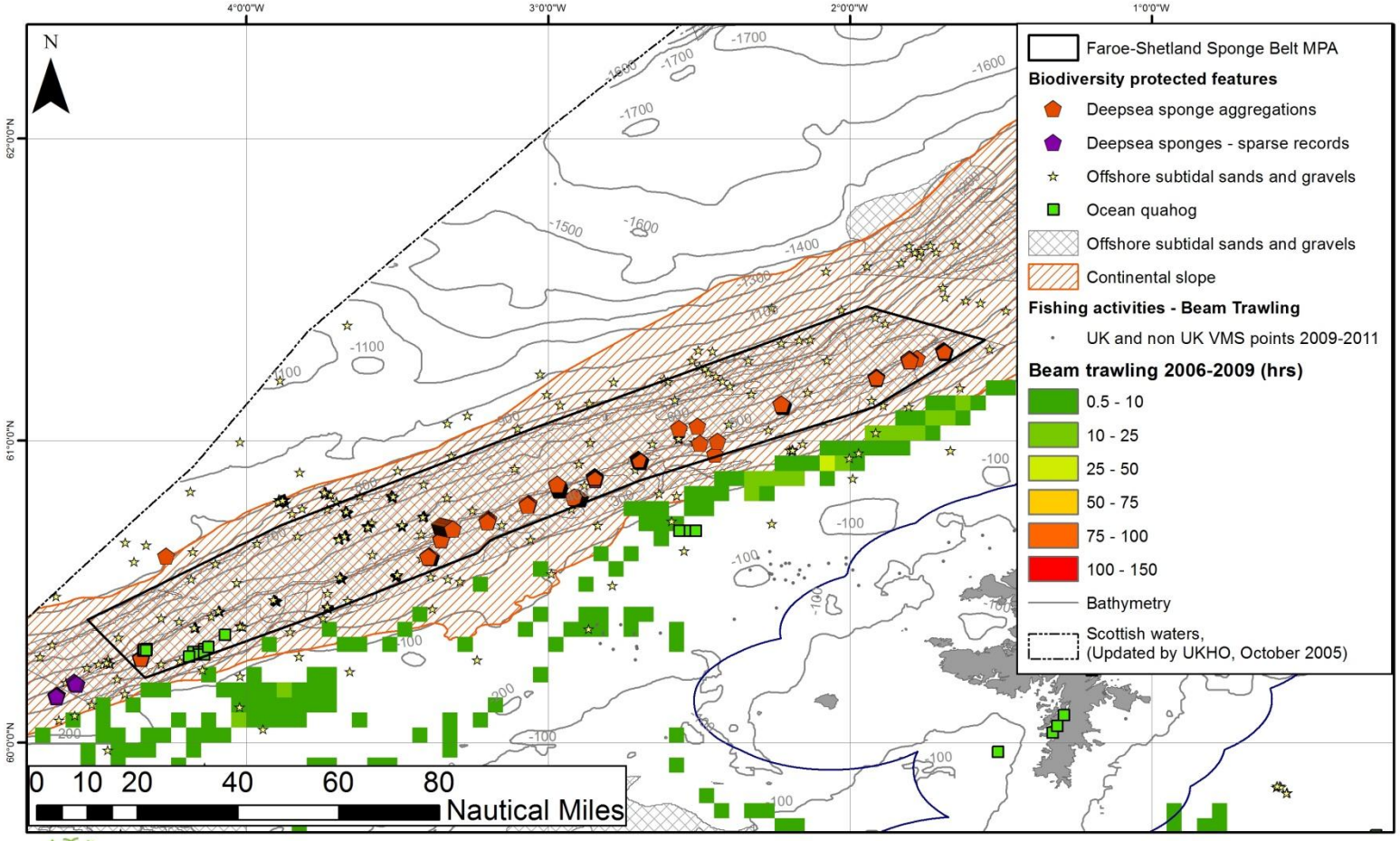
Otter trawling in the MPA is concentrated from the shelf edge boundary at 200m down to 700m, as shown in Map 4. Most of the deeper water (400-700m) trawling activity occurs towards the southern and western edge of the MPA. The majority of UK otter trawling activity in the region is concentrated on the shelf outside the MPA, although there is evidence of activity along the boundary (maximum effort in any overlapping fishing grid <658 hours 2006-2009) and in deeper water (300-600m; maximum effort in any overlapping fishing grid <128 hours 2006-2009).

French demersal trawling activity (maximum effort in any overlapping fishing grid <110 hours 2006-2009) follows a similar pattern to that of UK trawlers i.e. both on the shelf edge and along a deeper contour towards the south-western end of the MPA. There is also potential Norwegian otter trawling effort along most of the shelf portion of the MPA, although, based on the VMS data available, it has not been possible to distinguish between Norwegian longline and demersal otter trawl vessels. There is also some indication of low level activity from Irish and Faroese vessels in the deeper water of the MPA although there is currently insufficient data available to assess the significance of either fishery.

Management Options (e.g. beam and otter trawling)	**No additional management:** There is a risk of not achieving the conservation objectives for **offshore subtidal sands and gravels** and **ocean quahog aggregations**. The conservation objective would not be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should not be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur (depths between 400 and 600m). **Reduce/limit pressures:** This option would reduce, but not entirely eliminate, the risk of not achieving the conservation objectives for **ocean quahog aggregations** and **offshore subtidal sands and gravels.** Appropriate management for ocean quahog could include restrictions on gears considered to impact the species, such as scallop and hydraulic dredging. Appropriate management for offshore subtidal sands and gravels could include a zoned approach where management measures are introduced to protect specific depth corridors representative of the range of sedimentary communities on the continental slope. The depth corridors selected would need to take into consideration management proposed within the other MPAs on the continental slope, to ensure that the depth-based variation of sedimentary communities is adequately represented within managed zones across all the MPAs. There may be a greater requirement for restrictions on gears that penetrate deeply into the sediment. Restrictions could be permanent in some cases or temporary/adaptive in others. The location of areas to be covered by management restrictions would be decided in consultation with fishers. The conservation objective would not be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should not be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur. **Remove/avoid pressures:** This option would reduce the

	risk of not achieving the conservation objectives for **ocean quahog aggregations** and **offshore subtidal sands and gravels** to the lowest possible levels. This is the only option that would allow the conservation objective to be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur.

Map 3: Location of beam trawling activity in relation to protected features



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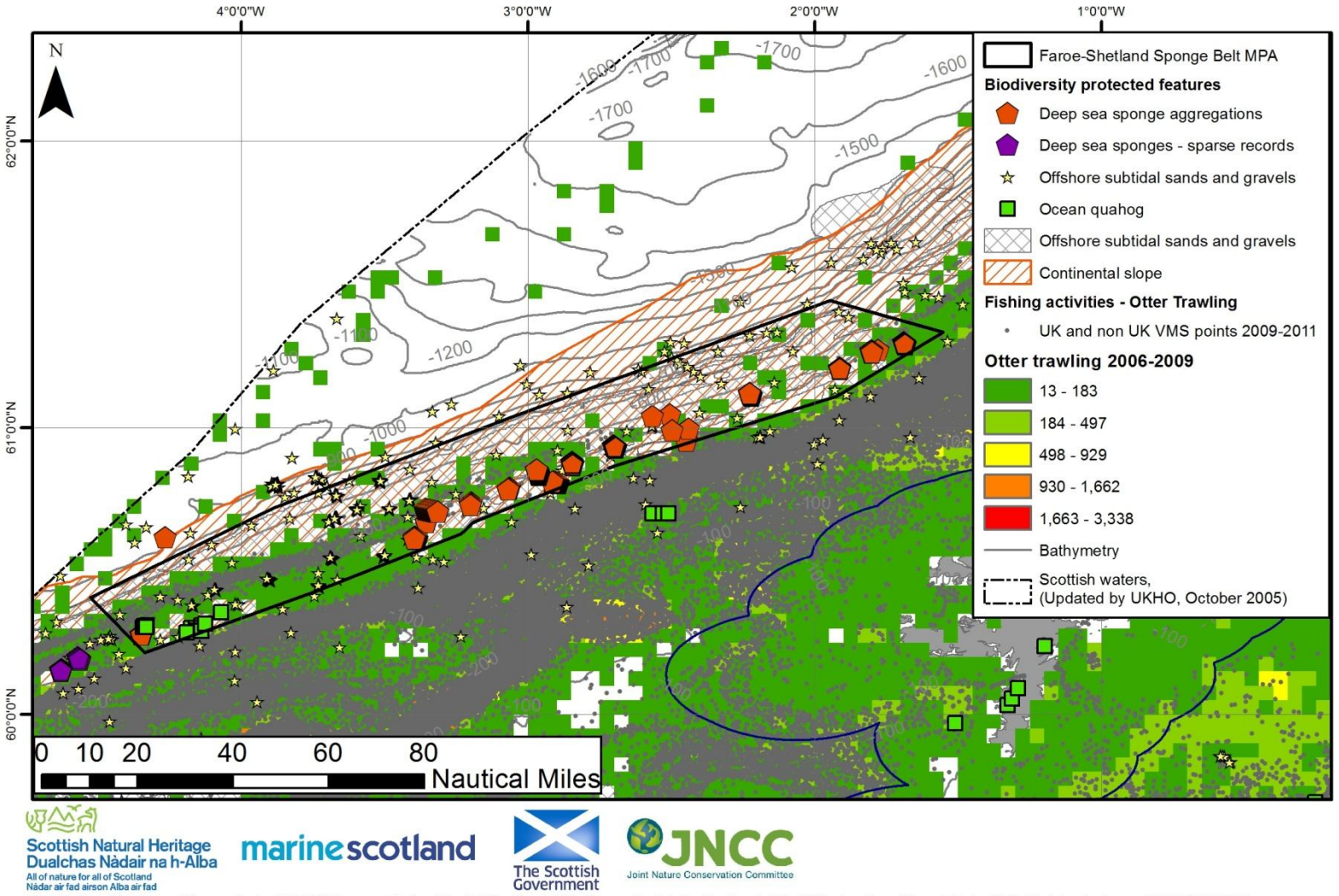
Map 4: Location of otter trawling in relation to protected features



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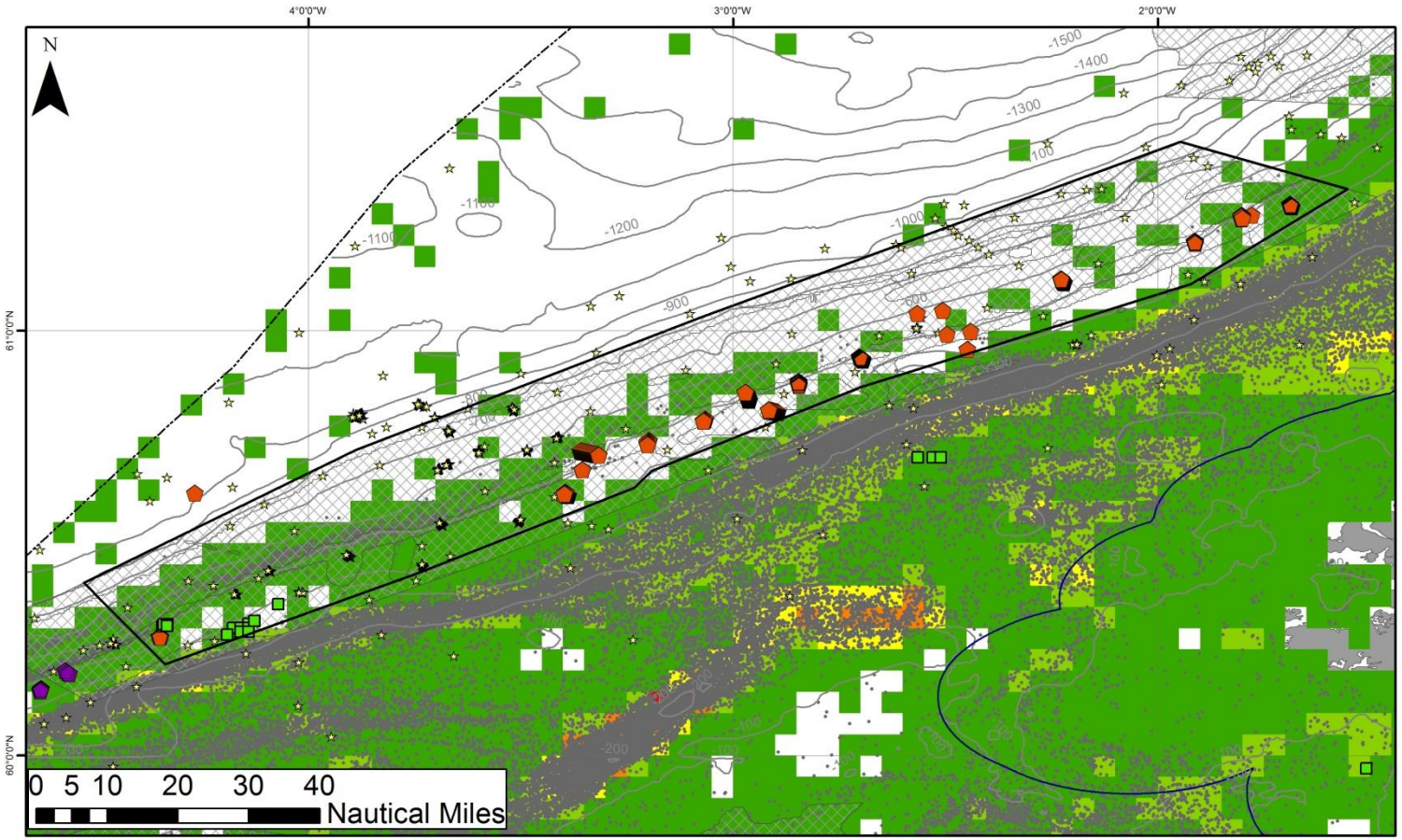
Map 4a: Zoomed map of otter trawling in relation to protected features (please see Map 4 for the legend)



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7.1.2 Static bottom contact gear

Set netting

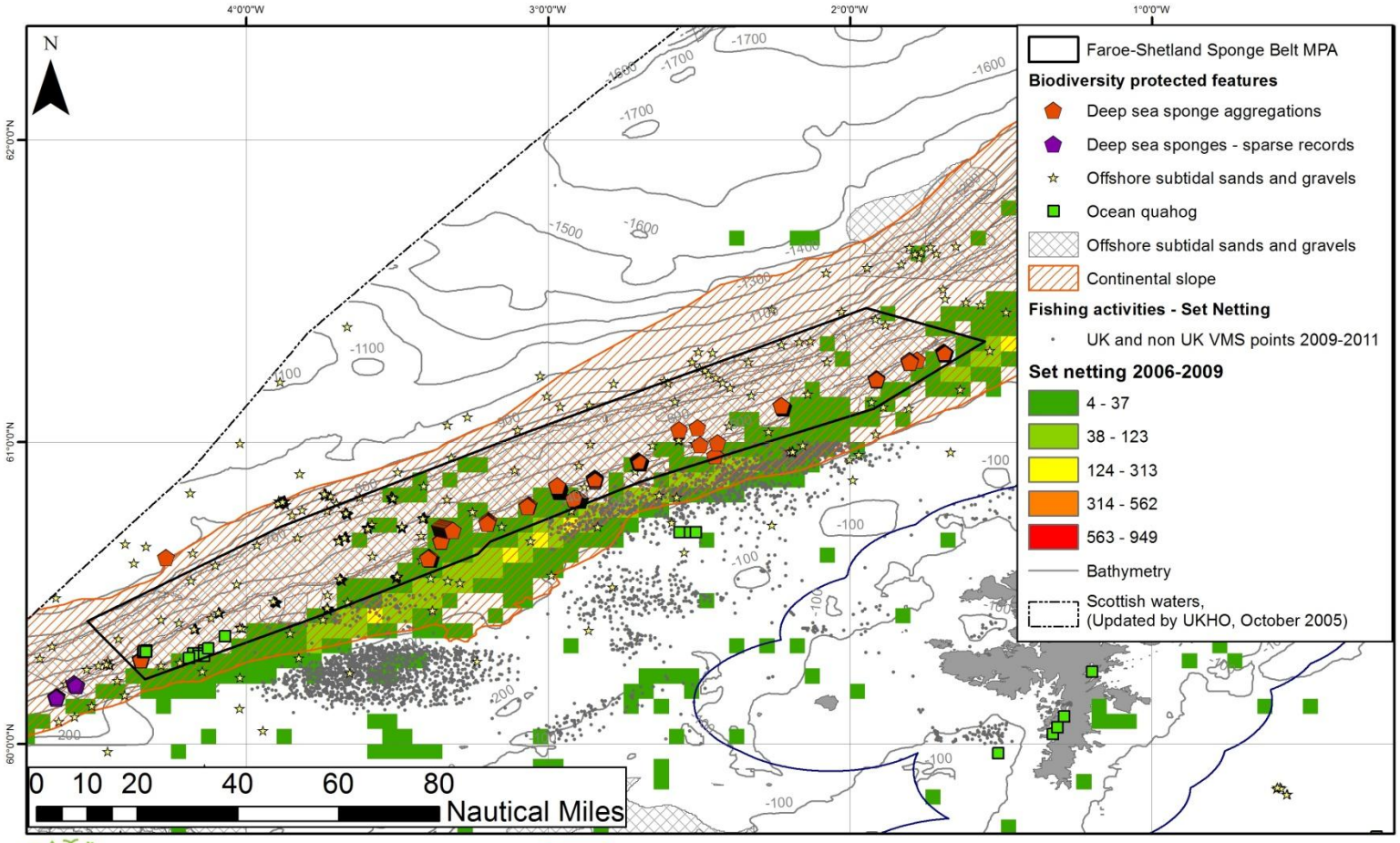
Set gill-netting in the MPA is concentrated between the 200m and 500m contours and overlaps the majority of the shallower shelf edge boundary, as shown in Map 5. The activity is principally from UK and German registered vessels (maximum effort in any overlapping fishing grid <350 hours 2006-2009 and <163 hours 2006-2009 respectively). VMS evidence suggests that the activity of both fleets is similarly distributed along the depth band.

Line fishing

Long-lining in the MPA is concentrated on the shelf edge predominantly between 200 and 400m depth contours, as shown in Map 6. UK and French long-lining vessels (maximum effort in any overlapping fishing grid <300 hours 2006-2009 and <60 hours 2006-2009 respectively) operate all along the shelf portion of the MPA. There is also evidence of Spanish (maximum effort in any overlapping fishing grid < 356 hours 2006-2009) long-lining vessels operating in the south-western part of the MPA, west of the 4° line. There is potential Norwegian long-lining effort along the shelf portion of the MPA, although, based on the VMS data available it has not been possible to distinguish between Norwegian demersal otter trawl and longline vessels.

Management Options (e.g. set netting and line fishing)	**No additional management**: This option is considered to be sufficient for bottom contacting static gear to achieve the conservation objectives for **ocean quahog aggregations** and **offshore subtidal sands and gravels**. The conservation objective would not be achieved for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should not be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur. **Remove/avoid pressure:** This is the only option that would achieve the conservation objective for **deep-sea sponge aggregations** and JNCC recommend that this option should be applied in areas where deep-sea sponge aggregations occur**.**

Map 5: Location of set netting activity in relation to protected features



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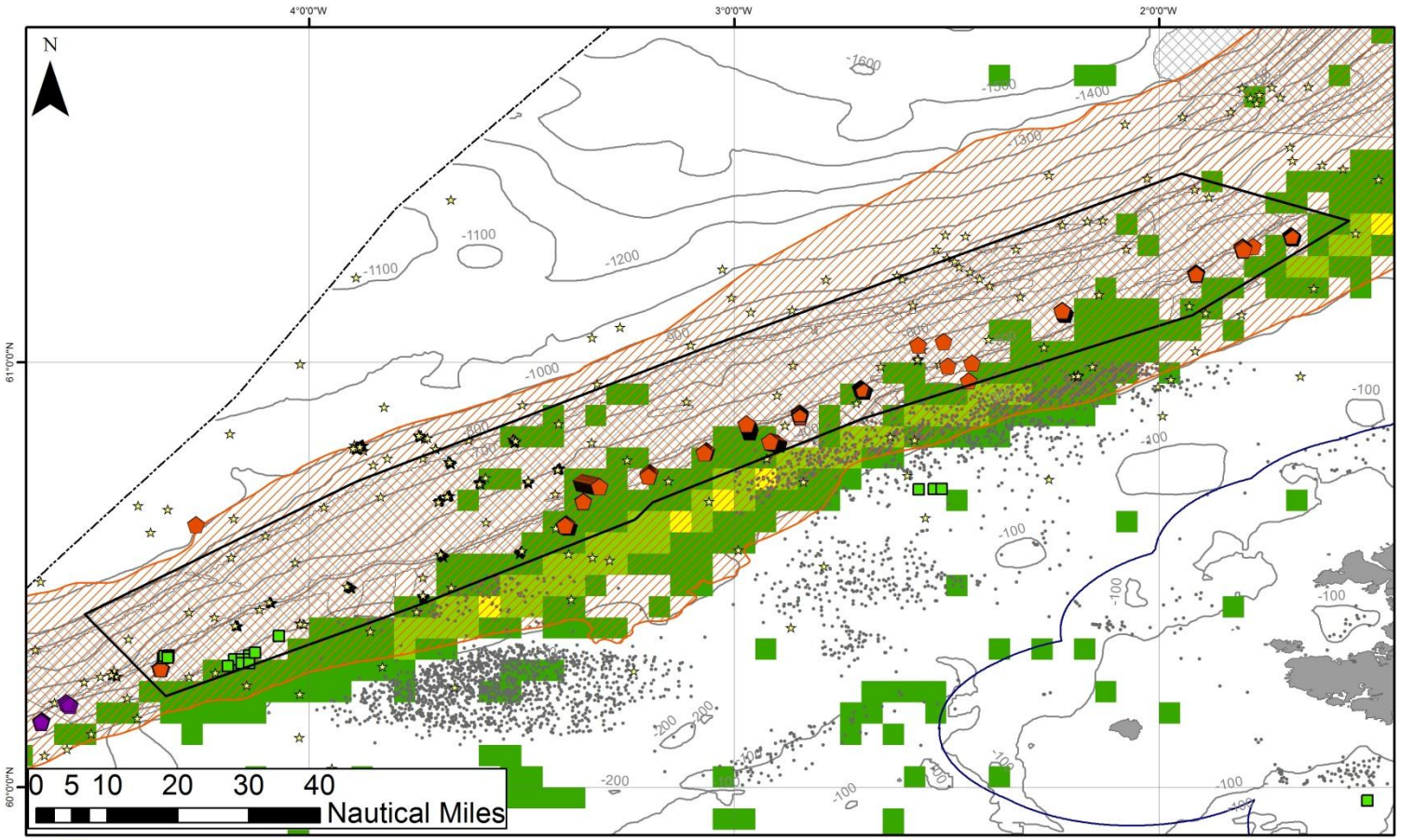
Map 5a: Zoomed map of set netting activity in relation to protected features (see Map 5 for legend)



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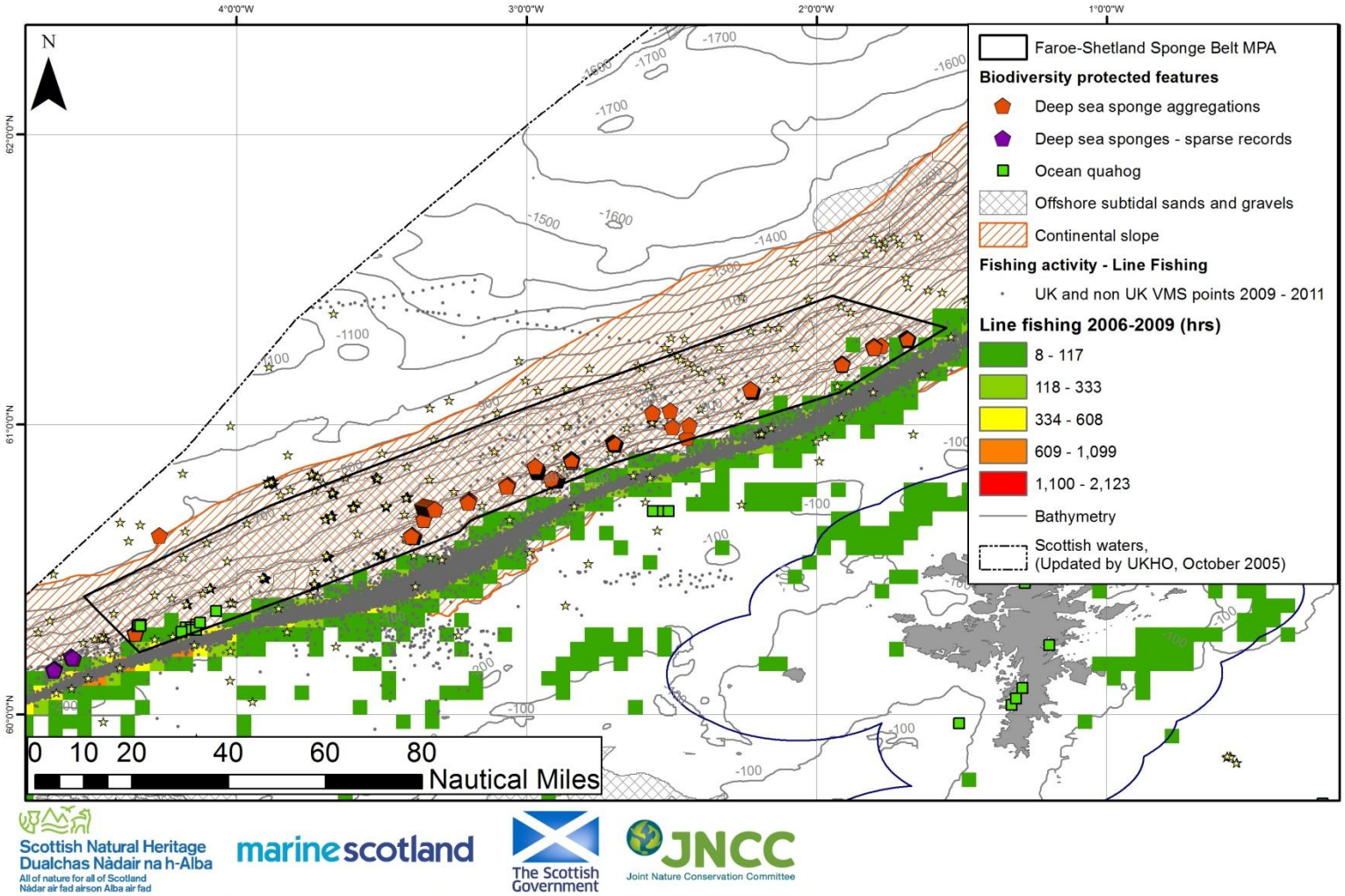
Map 6: Location of line fishing activity in relation to protected features



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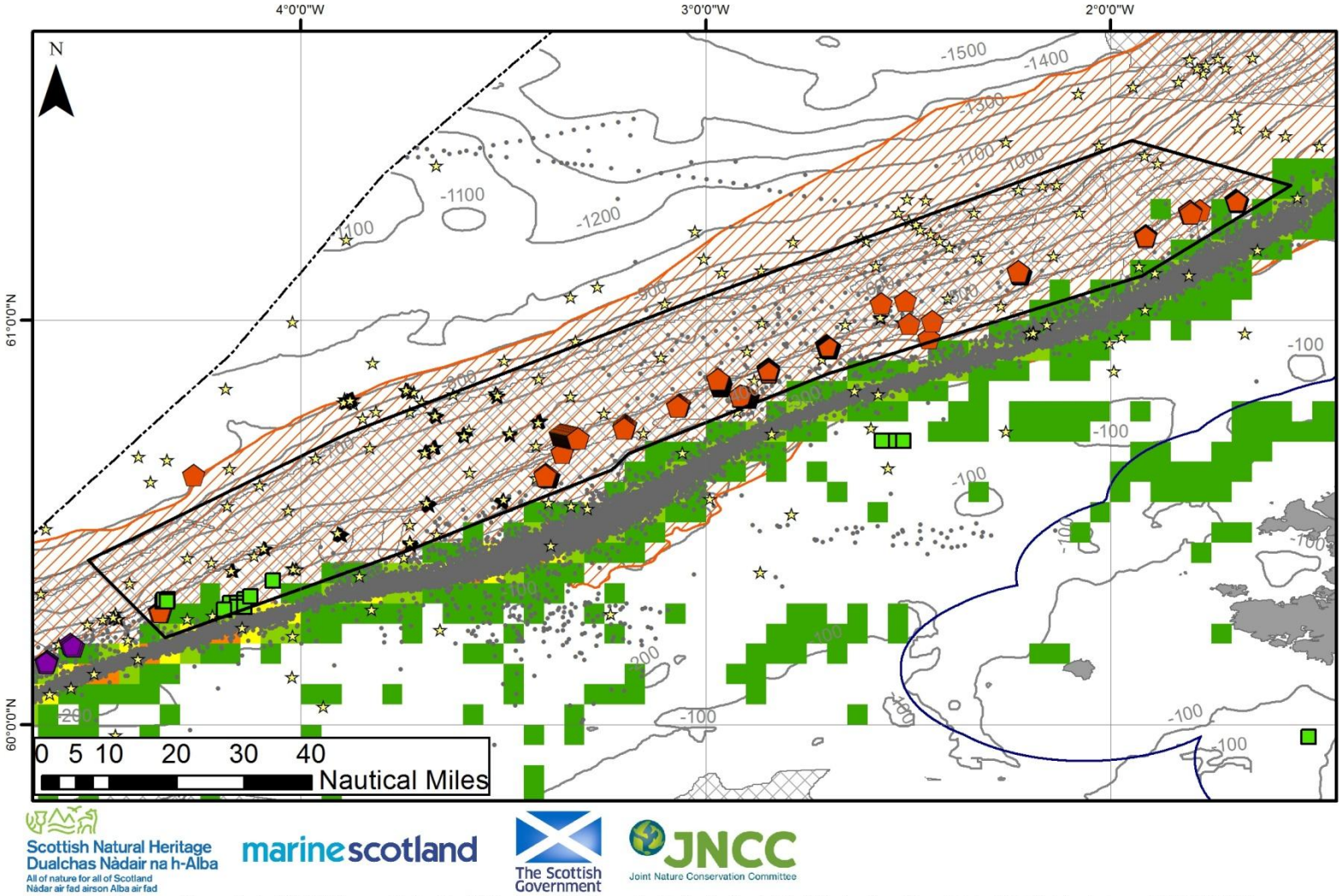
Map 6a: Zoomed map of line fishing activity in relation to protected features (please see Map 6 for legend)



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7.2 Licensed Activities

Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT), as the regulator for renewable energy operations in Scotland's seas, would be responsible for making the decision as to whether a proposed activity and/or development is capable of affecting (other than insignificantly[2]) the protected features of a Nature Conservation MPA.

For those activities and/or developments that MS-LOT considers require an EIA, JNCC is willing to engage at an early stage with MS-LOT and the developer to discuss the specific details of the proposed operation and/or development and offer advice on any potential effects. In so doing, JNCC will make reference to information on the sensitivity of the protected features to proposed activities and/or developments that is publicly available through 'FEAST' – The FEatures, Activities, Sensitivities Tool (Marine Scotland, 2013).

JNCC will consider the nature, scale, timing and duration of activities in providing its advice. Early engagement will facilitate discussions on the information we require to advise on possible implications to the protected features achieving their conservation objectives of the protected features. If JNCC identify a potentially significant effect, mitigation measures may be advised. Any such advice provided as part of the licensing process will need to be development specific. On this basis, the information JNCC provides as part of the (present) Management Options Paper is necessarily generic and therefore indicative.

Further information on the regulatory framework concerning renewables activity within Nature Conservation MPAs is included in the MPA Management Handbook.

7.2.1 Oil and gas activity and pipelines

Oil and gas activity takes place across the MPA, with wells located in the central and south-west regions, and platforms and associated infrastructure located in the south-west. A small section of pipeline crosses over the south-east boundary of the MPA (see Map 7). A large part of the MPA overlaps with an area identified by DECC as having potential for further oil and gas activity, and so may be subject to further development in the future.

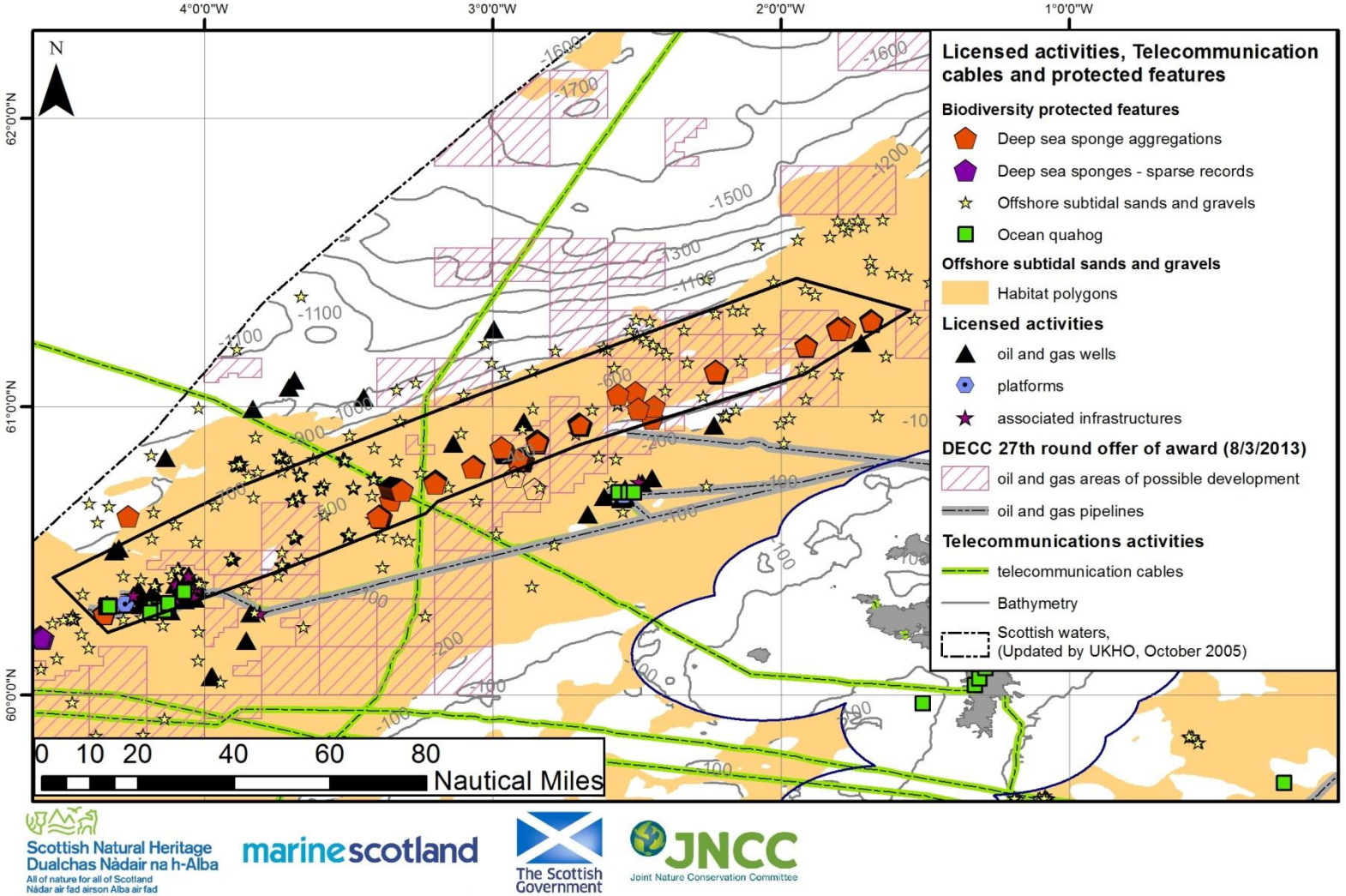
Management Options Licensed activities (e.g. oil and gas activity)	The potential impacts of oil and gas activity on the protected features within the MPA will be assessed through the existing EIA process on a case-by-case basis. Early dialogue with DECC and JNCC would help identify and resolve any issues at an early stage.

7.3 Telecommunication cables

Telecommunications cables are not subject to assessment under the EIA regulations (2009) and therefore do not, in general, go through the marine licensing process. As such, it is not possible to develop specific management options for unlicensed activities in relation to cables. Instead, discussions with operators would be welcomed at the earliest opportunity regarding plans for new cable installations, or for the maintenance or removal of existing cables.

Management options Telecommunication cables	Early discussions between JNCC and the operator would be welcomed for all plans relating to cables within the MPA, including installation, maintenance and removal. It is recommended that a voluntary Environmental Impact Assessment is undertaken to support plans for any new cable installation to assess the impacts of the associated activities on the protected features present.

Map 7: Location of oil and gas activity and pipelines in relation to protected features



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All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

marinescotland

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8 Conclusions and further recommendations

Marine Scotland will be responsible for making recommendations to Scottish Ministers on any management measures that may be required for the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA. These measures will be developed through on-going discussions with stakeholders following the MPA's designation. Any statutory measures will be subject to consultation and the processes normally required by the legislation will be utilised. Where fisheries management measures are necessary and the Nature Conservation MPA is located where Scottish Ministers do not have exclusive competence, then Marine Scotland intend to application to the European Commission for appropriate measures using the mechanisms under the EU Common Fisheries Policy. This process will include consultation on the measures at the EU level.

9 Further information

The following documents are available for background information:

- SNH and JNCC MPA network advice (December 2012) – www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5510
- The MPA Management Handbook - www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/marine-environment/mpanetwork/engagement/ManagementHandbook
- Features Activities Sensitivity Tool (FEAST) www.marine.scotland.gov.uk/FEAST/Index.aspx
- JNCC and SNH Fisheries guidance – www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6498

The following documents about the Faroe Shetland Sponge Belt MPA are also available on the JNCC website www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6479

- Site summary
- Data confidence assessment
- Detailed assessment against the MPA Selection Guidelines.