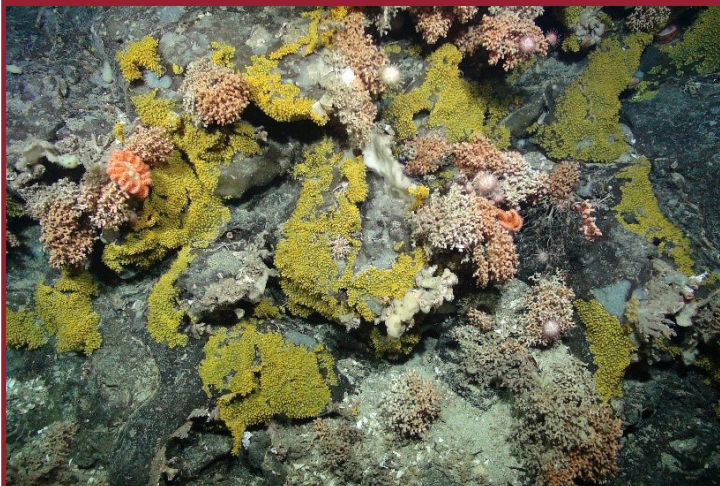




## West of Scotland MPA



Scottish Government announced the designation of the West of Scotland Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Scottish Waters.

The West of Scotland MPA is the largest Marine Protected Area in Europe, and protects a diverse marine landscape to the west of Scotland; from the steep gradient of the continental slope, across the sediment plains of the Rockall Trough, to the slopes of George Bligh Bank and Rockall Bank. The site also includes two isolated seamounts, Anton Dohrn and Rosemary Bank Seamount, created by extinct volcanoes. The MPA encompasses a range of species and habitats including deep-sea sponges, deep-sea muds and cold-water coral reefs as well as species such as long-lived gulper sharks and orange roughy.

The deep seas around Scotland are home to some of the most vulnerable and diverse habitats and species on Earth. More information on the MPA and its protected features can be found on our [Site Information Centre](#).

## Official Statistics on Butterfly Trends



[Official Statistics for trends of butterflies in the UK](#) between 1976 and 2019 were published, showing how habitat specialists and species of the wider countryside are faring. The release covers two measures of annual butterfly population abundance: the first for habitat specialist butterflies (species strongly associated with semi-natural habitats such as chalk downland), and the second for more widespread butterflies found in both semi-natural habitats and the wider countryside in the UK. Since 1976, populations of habitat specialists have declined significantly, though wider countryside species show no significant change. Habitat specialist species, which are vulnerable to semi-natural habitat loss and fragmentation, have not recovered from declines experienced in the late 1970s. These declines were mainly attributed to the knock-on effects of the drought conditions experienced in 1976.

The statistics are based on the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS), which is organised and funded by Butterfly Conservation, the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, British Trust for Ornithology, and JNCC. The UKBMS is indebted to the thousands of dedicated volunteers who contribute data to the scheme.

For more than 25 years JNCC has provided robust evidence and trusted advice on nature conservation to enable UK governments to achieve their policy objectives. As a public body we also work in partnership with business and society. Our people are dedicated to providing high-quality evidence and advice on the natural environment for the benefit of current and future generations. Our vision is to be a world-leading provider of innovative solutions, placing nature at the heart of sustainable wealth and wellbeing.



## 10 years of EMODnet



This year celebrates EMODnet's 10 years of achievements connecting marine data to knowledge. EMODnet is a long-term marine data initiative funded by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) based on a large network of people from over 150 organisations.

JNCC co-leads the EMODnet Seabed Habitat project with Ifremer. The project focuses on unlocking benthic habitat data and providing access to habitat maps and datasets through its [interactive Map Viewer](#) and [webservices](#). This [short video](#) captures the EMODnet story over the last ten years. It tracks our journey from its launch, to where we are at present and where our future is headed. Find out more on the [EMODnet pages](#).

## JNCC and TCI MoU



JNCC and the Turk and Caicos Islands (TCI) Government, through the Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR), are pleased to announce the signing of a 3-year Technical Assistance Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU reinforces the well-established relationship between JNCC and DECR and recognises the value of future collaboration. Through the MOU, JNCC and DECR will undertake a number of actions that contribute to the conservation and resilience of TCI's marine and terrestrial environments. Joint priorities for 2020-21 include: the ongoing development of TCI's national Environment Strategy; the use of the 25 Year Environment Plan for developing environmental monitoring indicators; and projects to help monitor and restore TCI's important coral reef ecosystem.

## Resilience of the Welsh uplands



JNCC's Chief Scientist, Christine Maggs, gave one of the plenary lectures at the virtual conference on resilience of the Welsh uplands, hosted by [Environment Platform Wales](#). The conference coincided with a storm of media coverage of the interlinked biodiversity and climate crises, including release by Siberian wildfires this summer of a record 244 megatonnes of carbon dioxide.

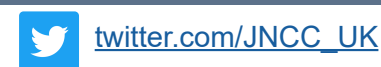
JNCC supports Wales in understanding resilience. JNCC's Gwawr Jones presented her Earth Observations-based decision tools concerning management of fire risk in the Brecon Beacons. Modernizing monitoring, linking new tools and requirements to historical standards, is a central role of JNCC: monitoring data is essential for determining the effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness of interventions, including for air quality. Our work on sustainability of food supply chains is also highly relevant to the interests of upland farming for conservation.

## Marine Mammal Observer Guidance Consultation

We've launched a [consultation](#) on our Marine Mammal Observer (MMO) guidance which provides details on changes we propose to make regarding the criteria for MMO training courses and their providers, and requests feedback on key aspects. The current course criteria, published in 2014, focussed on training MMOs working on seismic surveys. The purpose of this consultation is to update the recommended course criteria and consider additional aspects including course prerequisites, exams and how courses are provided. The consultation closes on Friday 30 October.



## Connect with us



If you have any comments, would like to know more about the work featured in this bulletin or would like to join our mailing list please email [communications@jncc.gov.uk](mailto:communications@jncc.gov.uk)

Images: Red squirrel © Allan Drewitt/Natural England | Deep-sea corals and sponges © Courtesy of the NERC funded Deep Links Project - Plymouth University, Oxford University, JNCC | Brown Argus © Anna Robinson | Turks & Caicos © Lucy Beagley | Snowdonia © Tania & Artur/Creative Commons License | Common dolphin © James West/Creative Commons License