

# Conservation Objectives for East of Gannet and Montrose Fields NCMPA

February 2018



## What the conservation advice package includes

The information provided in this document sets out the site's conservation objectives.

This forms part of JNCC's conservation advice package for the site and must be read in conjunction with all parts of the package as listed below:

- [Background document](#) explaining where to find the advice package, JNCC's role in the provision of conservation advice, how the advice has been prepared, when to refer to it and how to apply it;
- Conservation Objectives setting out the broad ecological aims for the site (this document);
- [Statements](#) on:
  - the site's protected feature condition and General Management Approach;
  - conservation benefits that the site can provide; and
  - conservation measures needed to further the conservation objectives stated for the site.
- [Supplementary Advice on the Conservation Objectives \(SACO\)](#) providing more detailed and site-specific information on the conservation objectives; and
- [Advice on Operations](#) providing information on those human activities that, if taking place within or near the site, could impact it and hinder the achievement of the conservation objectives stated for the site.

The most up-to-date conservation advice for this site can be downloaded from the conservation advice tab in the [Site Information Centre \(SIC\)](#) accessible on JNCC's website.

JNCC provide supplementary advice on the conservation objectives in the SACO document (see link in the box above). The SACO is essential reading to support interpretation of the conservation objectives set out below. The SACO provides further detail and site-specific information for each feature within the site, including which of the attributes listed in the conservation objectives needs to be conserved and which ones recovered.

The conservation objectives for the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (NCMPA) are that the protected features:

- so far as already in favourable condition, remain in such condition; and
- so far as not already in favourable condition, be brought into such condition, and remain in such condition.

With respect to the **Offshore deep-sea muds** within the NCMPA, this means that:

- extent is stable or increasing; and
- structures and functions, quality, and the composition of characteristic biological communities (which includes a reference to the diversity and abundance of species forming part of or living within the habitat) are such as to ensure that they remain in a condition which is healthy and not deteriorating;

Any temporary deterioration in condition is to be disregarded if the habitat is sufficiently healthy and resilient to enable its recovery from such deterioration.

Any alteration to that feature brought about entirely by natural processes is to be disregarded.

With respect to the **Ocean quahog aggregations (including supporting sedimentary habitats)** within the NCMPA, this means that the quality and quantity of its habitat and the composition of its population in terms of number, age and sex ratio are such as to ensure that the population is maintained in numbers which enable it to thrive.

Any temporary reduction of numbers is to be disregarded if the population is sufficiently thriving and resilient to enable its recovery. Any alteration to that feature brought about entirely by natural processes is to be disregarded.