



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
INFORMATION SHEET (NO.1)  
15 August 2023**

## OFFICER REPORT

<b>NAME OF REPORT UPDATE</b>	The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the South West Inshore & Offshore Marine Plan
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### BRIEF REPORT



The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) was created in 2009 by the Marine and Coastal Access Act. The MMO is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. Driven by government's aim for clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, MMO's purpose is to protect and enhance the marine environment, and support UK economic growth by enabling sustainable marine activities and development. The MMO's delivery functions are: marine planning, marine licensing, wildlife licensing and enforcement, marine protected area management, marine emergencies, fisheries management and issuing grants.

Under delegation from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (the marine planning authority), the MMO is responsible for preparing marine plans for English inshore and offshore waters. At its landward extent, a marine plan will apply up to the Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) mark, which includes the tidal extent of any rivers. As marine plan boundaries extend up to the level of MHWS, there will be an overlap with terrestrial plans, which generally extend to the Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) mark.

Published June 2021 the South West Inshore and South West Offshore Marine Plans provide guidance for sustainable development from the border with Wales to the River Dart in Devon. The South-west Inshore Marine Plan area covers an area of approximately 2,000 kilometres of coastline stretching from the River Severn border with Wales to the River Dart in Devon, taking in a total of approximately 16,000 square kilometres of sea. This is illustrated in Figure 1. The area overlaps with 16 local authorities, Exmoor National Park and five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The inshore area includes an open, dramatic coastline and the offshore area contains England's only deep-water habitats as well as the only oceanic archipelago – the Isles of Scilly - in the UK. The communities that exist within the south west area have a strong maritime heritage and are intrinsically linked to the identified marine area.

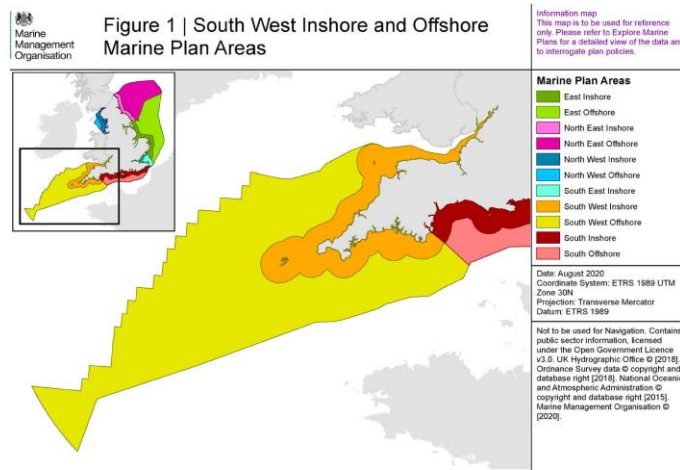
The South West Marine Plan should be used for all planning decisions for the sea, coast, estuaries and tidal waters (which sometimes extend a long distance inland), as well as developments that impact these areas, such as infrastructure for example. As well as public authorities, all applicants, third parties and advisors should consider the South West Marine Plan. Proposals should conform with all relevant policies, taking account of economic, environmental, and social considerations and address the key

issues for the area. Detailed policies in the Plan set out how these will be achieved and how issues will be managed or mitigated. While some policies apply across the whole south west inshore and offshore marine plan areas, other policies apply only to specific areas. Section 1 of the Plan provides background information. Section 2 includes the Plan’s vision, objectives and policies, Section 3 provides guidance for those using and implementing the Plan and Section 4 includes a description of how monitoring and reporting of the Plan’s implementation and the effectiveness of the Plan’s policies will be carried out. There are 55 planning policies covering a wide range of topics: Biodiversity, Cross border cooperation; Invasive species, Marine Protection Areas, Cumulative and co-existence effects, Noise, Defence, Air & Water Quality, Marine litter, Tourism, Infrastructure, Aggregates & dredging, Aquaculture, Oil & Gas, Cables, Ports/Harbours & Shipping, Heritage Assets, Seascape & Landscape, Renewables and Climate Change.

For more information on how to use marine plans please visit the Using Marine Plans link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-marine-plans#plans>

Figure 1 South West Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan Areas



Under Section 58(3) of Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) 2009 all public authorities making decisions capable of affecting the UK marine area (but which are not for authorisation or Enforcement) must have regard to the relevant marine plan and the UK Marine Policy Statement. This includes local authorities developing planning documents for areas with a coastal influence. The UK Marine Policy Statement and relevant marine plans are material considerations for decision-making, but Local Plans may be a more relevant consideration in certain circumstances. This is because a marine plan is not a ‘development plan’ under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Local planning authorities should consider this, when determining whether a planning application above MHWS should be referred to the MMO for a consultee response.

Stroud District Council have consulted with the MMO regarding the emerging Stroud District Local Plan and its accompanying evidence base. The marine plan vision, objectives and policies have been taken into consideration in our plan-making. In this way the Local Plan has a role to provide a way of implementing government’s marine policies at a local level.

<b>REPORT SUBMITTED BY</b>	Conrad Moore, Principal Planning Officer, Planning Strategy.
<b>DATE</b>	15.08.23