



## **OUTER BELFAST LOUGH MARINE CONSERVATION ZONE DESIGNATION ORDER**

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (the “Department”), with the agreement of the Secretary of State, makes this Order in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 13(1) and (5) and 43(7) of the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 (the “Act”). The Department thinks it desirable to make this Order for the conservation purposes specified in section 14(1) of the Act in relation to the protected features and conservation objectives stated in the Order.

The Department has had regard to any economic, cultural or social consequences specified in section 14(7) of the Act and to any obligations under EU or international law that relate to the conservation or improvement of the marine environment, and is satisfied that the objective and conditions specified in section 20(2) and (3) of the Act are met.

The Department published a notice of its intention to make this Order on 14 December 2015, and has consulted with the Secretary of State and any other persons likely to be interested in, or affected by, it in accordance with section 16(2) and (4) of the Act.

### **Area designated**

The Department designates the area of sea, falling within the Northern Ireland inshore region, shown below (the “marine area”) as a marine conservation zone to be known as the Outer Belfast Lough Marine Conservation Zone (“Outer Belfast Lough MCZ”) shown in Annex I.

For the purposes of this Order, the marine area designated as the Outer Belfast Lough MCZ includes the water within the marine area and any area of seabed or other land (whether or not covered by water) seaward of the mean high water spring tide mark. The boundary for the Outer Belfast Lough MCZ is more fully described in the following table:

<b>Boundary Line</b>	<b>Set of co-ordinates of points which the boundary line joins</b>	<b>Topographical description of the boundary line</b>
1	A, B	Geodesic line
2	B, C	Geodesic line
3	C, D	Geodesic line
4	D, E	Geodesic line
5	E, F	Geodesic line
6	F, A	Geodesic line

Where:

- “A” is 54° 42.711' N and 5° 36.670' W;
- “B” is 54° 42.707' N and 5° 34.734' W;
- “C” is 54° 42.315' N and 5° 34.733' W;
- “D” is 54° 42.316' N and 5° 35.203' W;
- “E” is 54° 41.978' N and 5° 35.203' W; and
- “F” is 54° 41.979' N and 5° 36.672' W.

The protected features and conservation objectives are as follows:

<b>Protected Features</b>	<b>Conservation Objectives</b>
<b>Habitats:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subtidal (sublittoral) sand</li> </ul>	<b>Recover to Favourable Condition</b>
<b>Species:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ocean quahog (<i>Arctica islandica</i>)</li> </ul>	<b>Recover to Favourable Condition</b>

“Favourable condition”, in relation to marine habitats or geological features, means that the habitat's or geological features' extent is stable or increasing and its structures, functions, quality and the composition of its characteristic biological communities (including diversity and abundance) are such that it remains in a healthy condition, which is not deteriorating.

“Favourable condition”, in relation to marine species, means that the quality and quantity of the species, habitat, and the composition of its population in terms of number, age, and sex ratio ensures that the population is maintained in numbers that enable it to thrive.

For the purposes of determining whether a protected feature is in favourable condition, any temporary deterioration in condition or reduction in numbers shall be disregarded if the habitat or population is sufficiently healthy, thriving and resilient to enable its recovery.

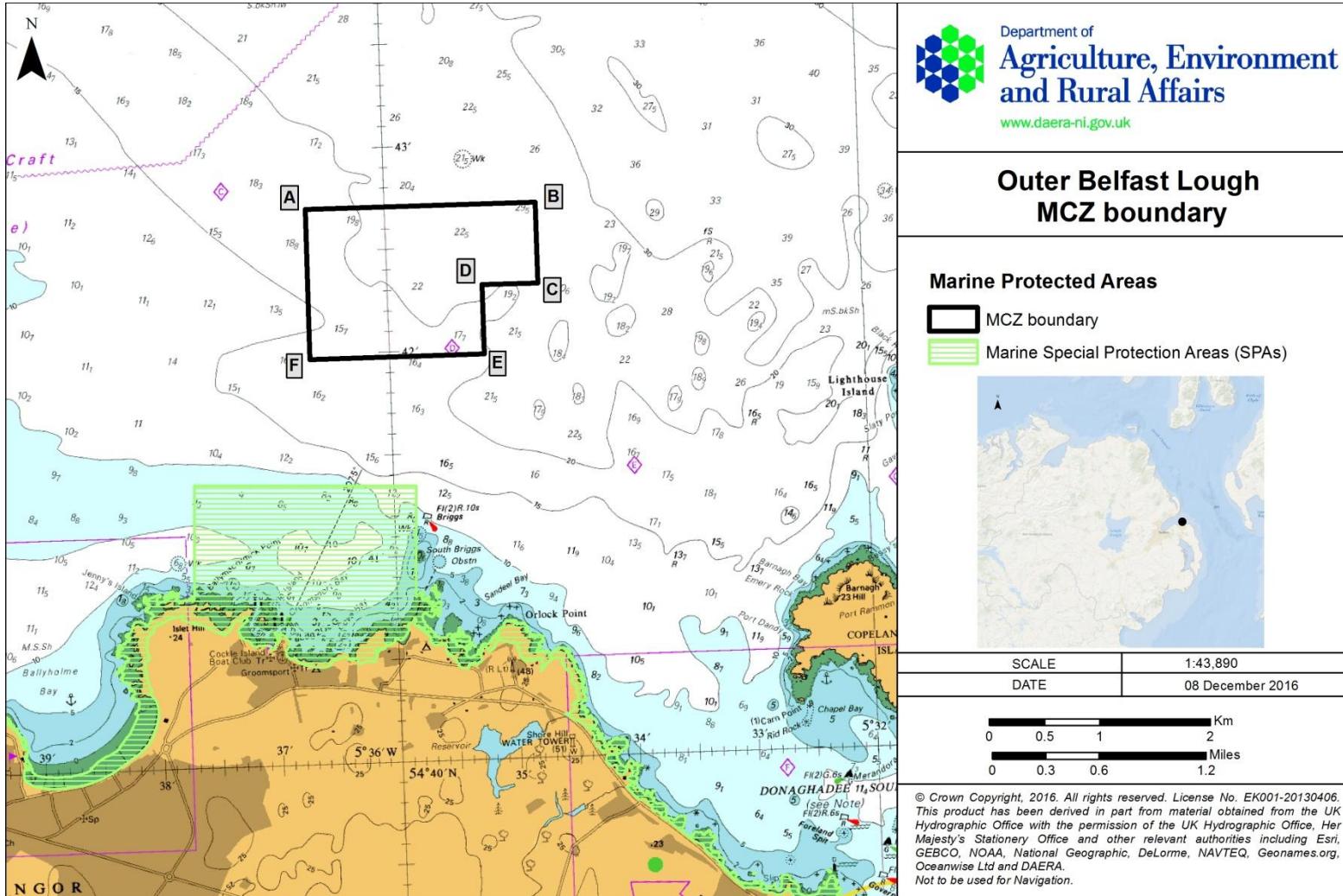
For the same purposes, any alteration to that feature brought about entirely by natural processes shall be disregarded.

Signed by a Senior Official

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

12 December 2016

## **Annex I**



## **Figure 1 Outer Belfast Lough Marine Conservation Zone**