

The Authorisation of Activities in European Marine Sites

Under Regulation 61 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

Step 1: Screening for Likely Significant Effects

Is the proposed activity a “plan or project” that is directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of the site?

Yes

No further assessment is required. The activity will gain assent.

No

Is the proposal likely to have a significant effect on the site alone or in combination with other activities?

No

This question is interpreted very strictly. Natural England advises that if there is a “possible pathway for an impact to occur”, further assessment is required¹.

Yes

Step 2: Conducting an Appropriate Assessment

We assess the implications of the activity for the site's conservation objectives and seek advice from Natural England during Step 2. We consider site sensitivities, and how and to what extent the activity could have an impact.

Will the activity have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects?

Yes

Can the proposal be amended to reduce impacts to an acceptable level to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the site?

No

Step 3: Authorisation decision

Eastern IFCA authorises the activity.

No

The proposal is amended and Eastern IFCA authorises the activity.

Yes

If the activity cannot be amended to avoid adverse effect on the integrity of a European Marine Site, then Eastern IFCA will not authorise it unless all of the following conditions are met:

- There are no feasible alternative solutions to the plan or project that are less damaging to the site
- There are imperative reasons of overriding public interest that require the activity to go ahead
- All necessary compensatory measures are secured to ensure that the overall coherence of the network of European sites is protected.