

# ABPmer to Deliver Sustainable Management of Marine Natural Resources Project



In 2019, the Welsh Government will publish its first-ever Welsh National Marine Plan. Sustainable management of marine and coastal natural resources is central to the plan. To help take the plan forward, the Welsh Government have commissioned ABPmer, a marine environmental consultancy, to investigate and develop a greater understanding of how areas of natural resources interact with Wales' rich natural heritage, including those areas designated for specific species or habitats. By developing an understanding of the key spatial opportunities and constraints, those wishing to use Welsh seas will understand how they can do so sustainably.

## Data Sets of the Welsh Marine Area

Earlier work commissioned by the Welsh Government reviewed the available evidence; collating and quality assessing over 420 data sets relevant to tidal stream energy, wave energy and aquaculture sectors. These data sets covered topics associated with physical, chemical, biological and human-environmental data in the Welsh marine area.

Following a review of the collated data, recommendations were made on how evidence and data gaps could be addressed. One such recommendation was to collect additional physical and biological data from the seabed, to increase confidence and refine existing habitat maps across Welsh waters.

## Evidence, Guidance and Information

Work is now underway to use the findings from the initial project to develop evidence packages related to resource areas providing guidance, spatial data, and information on constraints and opportunities to support the Sustainable Management of Marine Natural Resources (SMMNR) within Wales.

Natalie Frost, Head of Environment at ABPmer, said "The project will provide quality evidence, guidance, information on constraints and spatial data to inform decision-making on practical, sustainable development activities in the Welsh marine area."

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