

Introduction to the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

Ages 4-7



Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

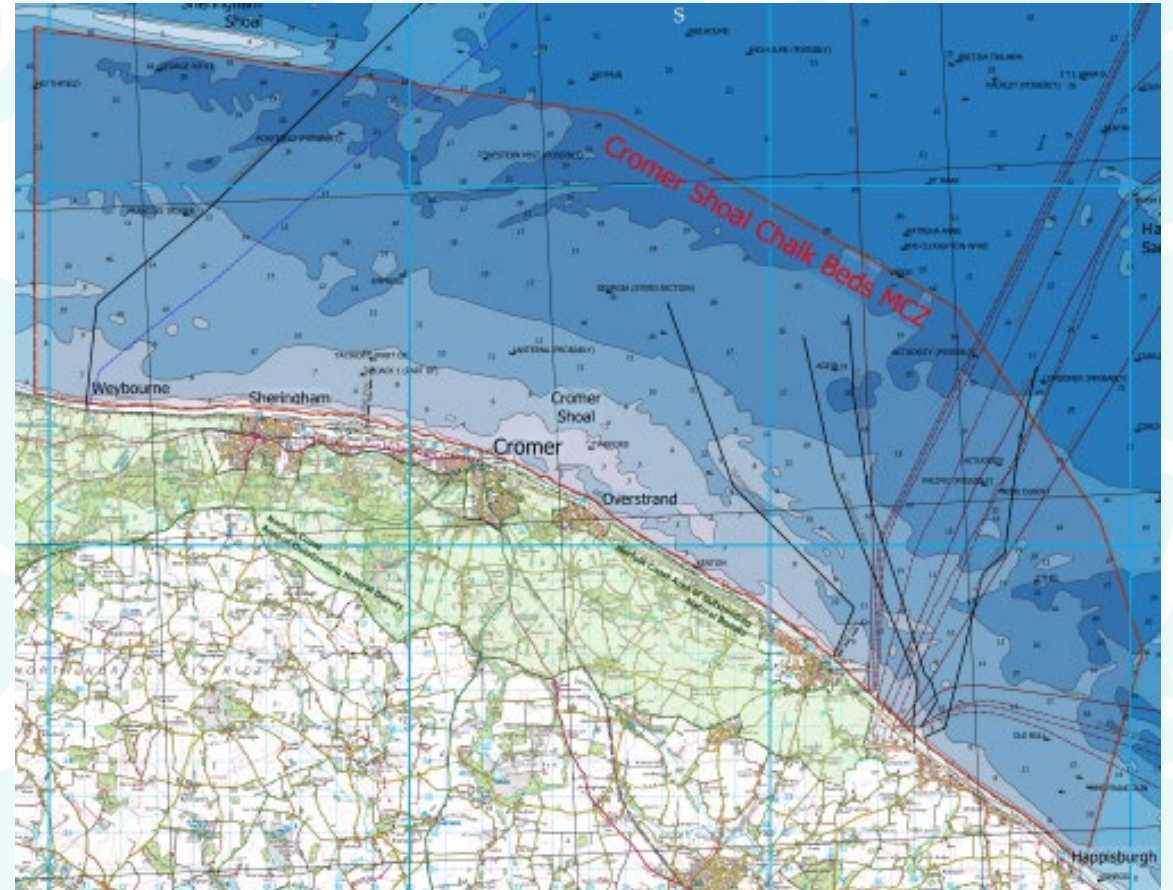


Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

A shoal is a **shallow area of sea**.

Can you see the different shades of **blue** on the map?

The pale parts on the map are shallow.



Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

Chalk is a type of rock.

It is a **fragile, white rock**.

You can see some of the chalk exposed at low tide at some beaches.

Photo: Rob Coleman



Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

This refers to the seabed or **sea floor**.

Part of the seabed here is made of chalk.

It is sometimes called the chalk reef.



Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

Marine is relating to the **sea**.

Where else have you heard the word
'marine'?



Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

Root word = **conserve**

To keep it from being changed or spoiled
by human activity



Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone

An area

In this case: the area where marine conservation happens.



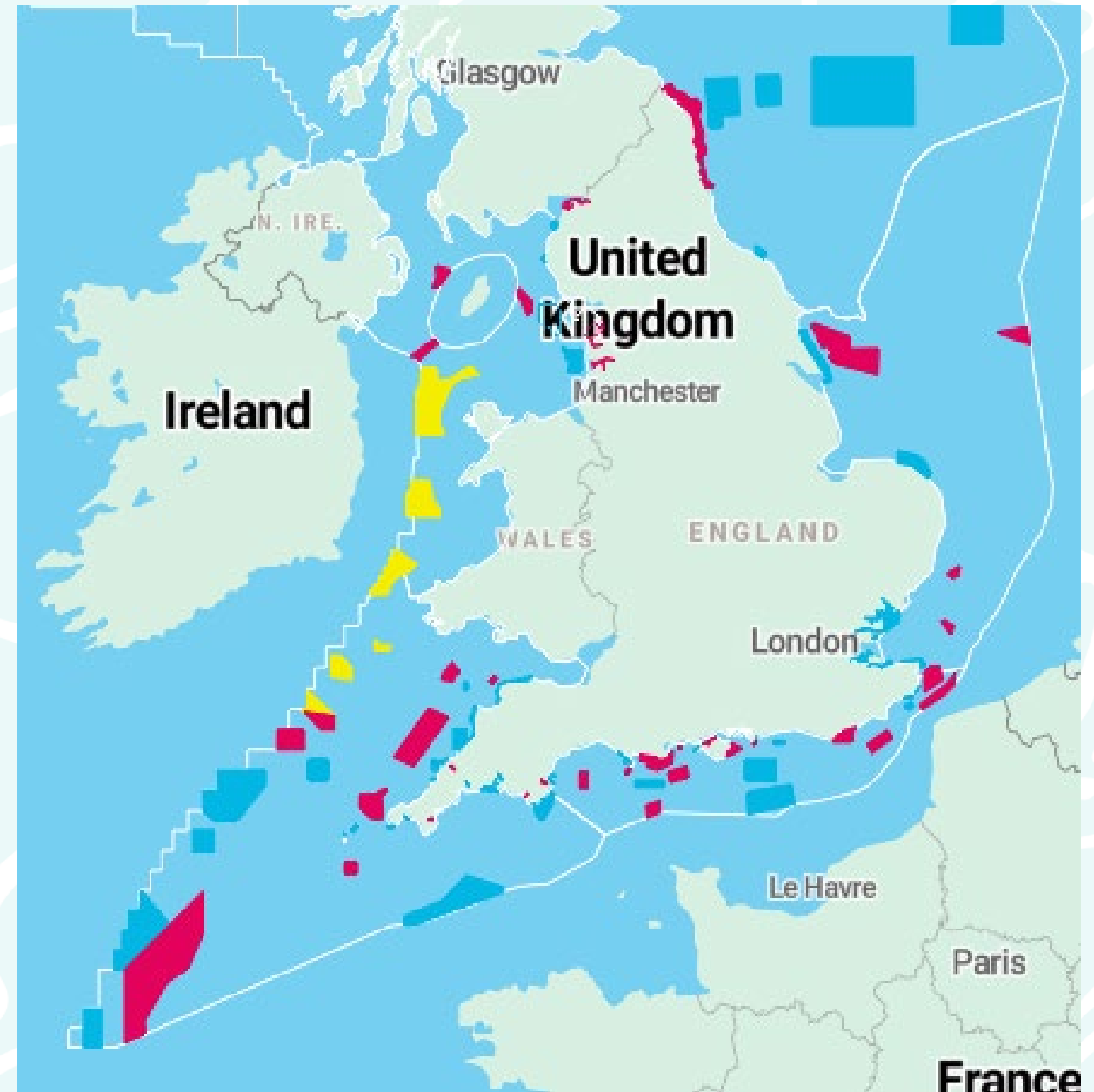


**Let's find out a bit more about the
Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds
Marine Conservation Zone**

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone was designated in **2016**.

This map shows the **91** Marine Conservation Zones.

Can you spot the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ?



Taken from: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/marine-protected-areas/england>

The Marine Conservation Zone starts 200m off the beach & extends about 10km out.



The chalk beds have holes, arches and ridges up to 3m high. These provide great places for wildlife to live.

It is the largest chalk reef in Europe.



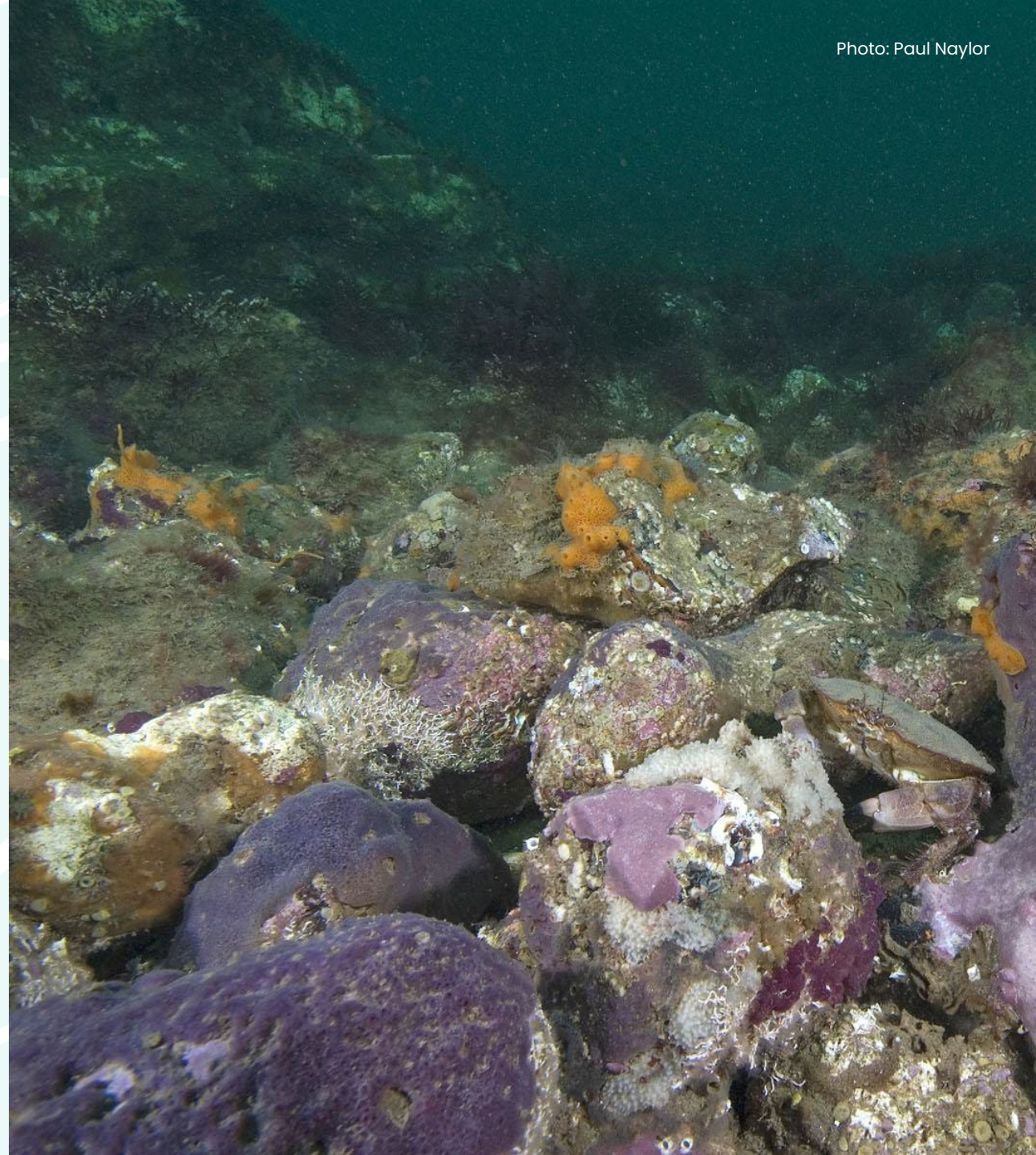
The chalk also provides a surface for marine life such as sponges and seaweeds to attach or burrow into.

These crabs attach pieces of sponge to their shells for camouflage!



In 2011 some divers noticed a purple sponge, and with the help of scientists they realised it was new to science! It is the only place in the world where it is known to live.

In 2021 a competition was organised that a local schoolgirl won. She named it **Parpal Dumplin** because it is purple and looks a bit like a dumpling!



Fishing

Fishing is the main activity in the MCZ but not for fish... for crabs and lobsters! There is a long history of fishing here and it is an important industry for the area.

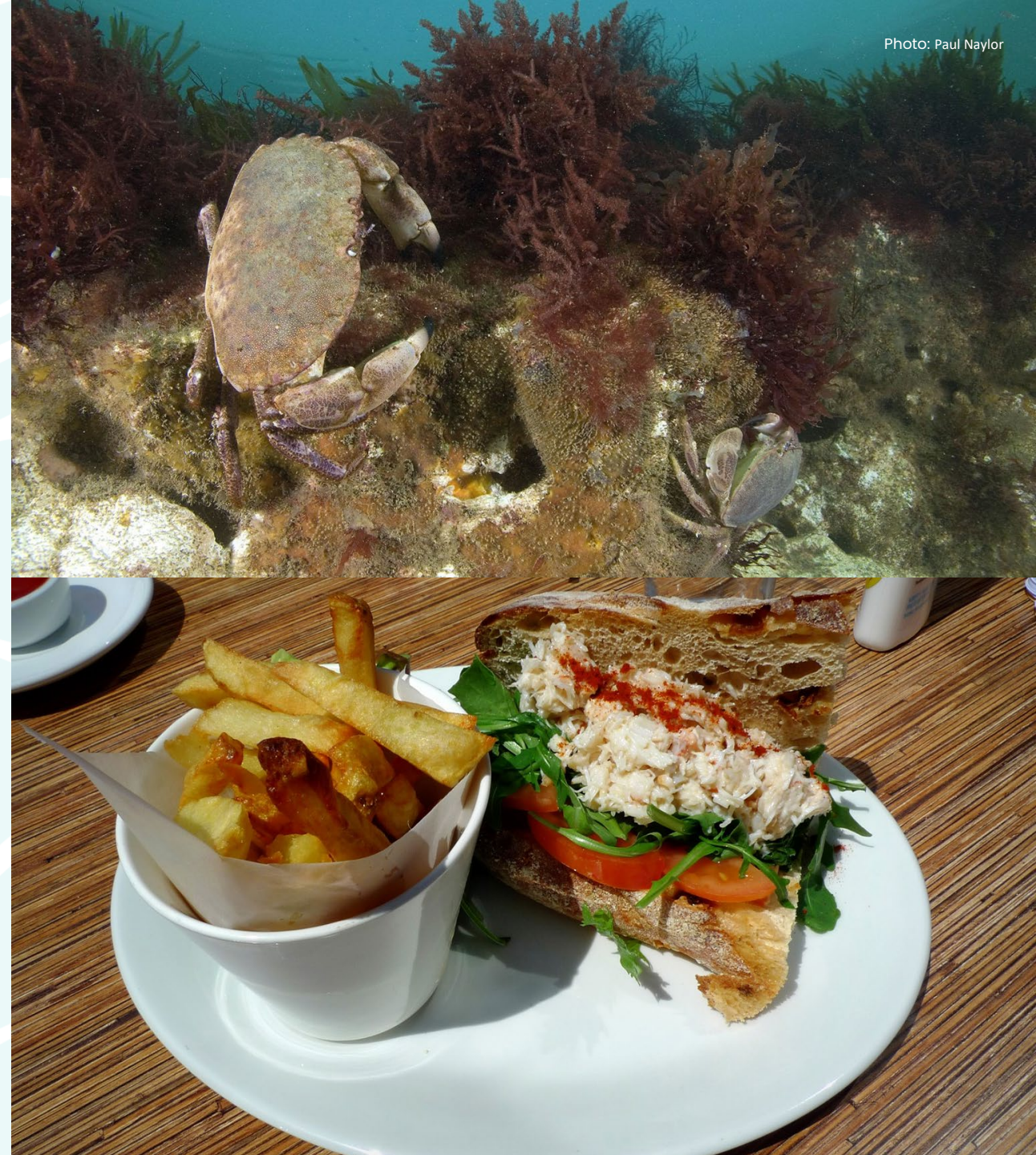
Crab pots are the traps used for catching the crabs and lobsters.



Crabs

Cromer crabs are famous! The crabs love hiding in the holes in the chalk.

Photo: Paul Naylor



Tourism

Lots of people visit the area on day trips or for their holiday and visit the beach.



Other activities in the area include boating, diving and snorkelling.



What does the Marine Conservation Zone do?

The MCZ aims to:

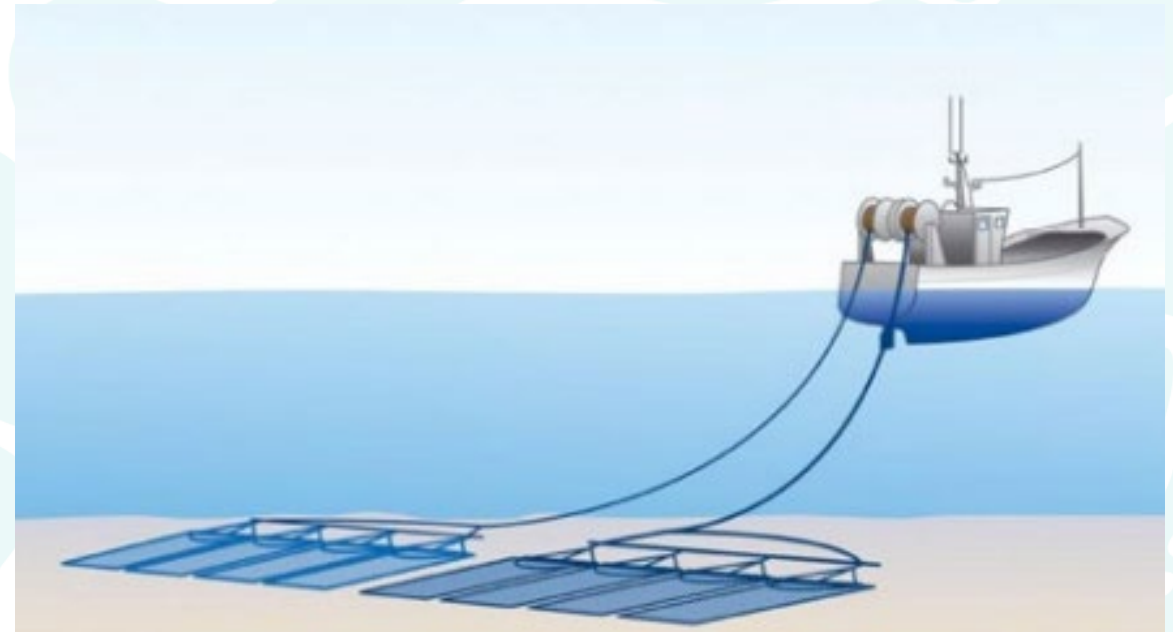
- Keep the chalk reef in good condition
- Provide benefits for people that live, work and visit the area

This means that activities can continue so long as they don't harm the chalk beds or the wildlife that lives there.

There are laws and guidance that protect the area, and these may change over time.

Damage from trawling and dredging in the MCZ

Trawling and dredging is banned in most of the MCZ.



Overfishing

If too many crabs and lobsters are caught, there would be none left.

Fishermen measure the crabs they catch. Crabs that are too small must be put back. The bigger crabs that are allowed to be caught have lived long enough to lay eggs.



Photo: christaylorphoto.co.uk

Beach cleans

Litter is sometimes dropped by visitors or fishing gear can get lost. This can cause problems for wildlife, particularly with plastics.

People volunteer at beach cleans to collect rubbish to keep it out of the sea.



Summary

- Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone is a special place.
- The chalk on the seabed provides a special habitat for lots of wildlife.
- Fishing is an important industry in the area.
- Humans need to make sure they do not damage or harm this place and its wildlife.