



Annual impact review 2015-16

Protecting our seas, shores and wildlife

Foreword



Our seas and coasts are vital to us all - clean beaches, healthy fish stocks and abundant marine wildlife support our own health, wealth and wellbeing.

With ever increasing pressures on our seas' resources, the Marine Conservation Society's work is as important as ever.

Over the past year, through campaigns, advocacy, volunteer engagement, collaboration and education, MCS has influenced and inspired major strides in marine conservation:

- 23 additional Marine Conservation Zones were designated in English waters bringing the total so far to 50, in addition to the 30 Marine Protected Areas designated in Scotland's seas.
- 12 high street restaurant chains were assessed for their sustainable seafood policies in partnership with Fish2Fork.
- 45% of reduction fisheries for farmed fish meal and fish oil are now certified to internationally recognised responsible standards.
- A record 6,035 volunteers turned out for the UK-wide annual MCS Great British Beach Clean collecting 277,354 items of litter from 340 beaches.

- A plastic bag charge was introduced in England, completing our campaign for charges to apply across the UK.
- Over 300,000 individuals pledged to stop buying personal care products containing microplastics.

MCS exists to ensure the long-term future of our seas and in 2015, we published 'Our Seas Our Future' – a blueprint for our work up to 2020 to secure a healthy, sustainable future for our seas and all that depend on them.

There is still a great deal to do to complete the UK network of Marine Protected Areas, ensure that sustainable seafood is the only available option, reverse the rising trends in plastic litter on our beaches and engage this and future generations in appreciation of all our seas and coasts offer.

The achievements and progress set out within this impact review are only made possible through the generous support of our members, supporters, volunteers, funders and partners in business and other NGOs. To all who have supported us, thank you for your generosity, for lending your time, and for adding your voice to our call for seas fit for life – for marine life, for sustainable livelihoods and for future lifetimes.

Sam Fanshawe
Chief Executive

31st March 2016

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This summary review describes some of the key activities and outcomes of the Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) work during the year 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016. It cannot be exhaustive, especially for a year of such considerable activity, but full information, together with detailed financial statements is reported in the full audited statutory accounts available from MCS Head Office., or online: www.mcsuk.org/annualreview

Our vision, mission and approach



Vision

Seas fit for life - clean seas and coasts that support abundant marine life, healthy fish stocks and enjoyment for all.



Mission

To achieve measurable improvements in the state of our seas, marine biodiversity and fish stocks through changes in government policy, industry practice and individual behaviour.



Approach

We believe that key drivers for change are to inform and involve people, communities and stakeholders in our work and influence decision makers and businesses through public engagement and collaboration, as well as through direct advocacy and campaigns.



2015-16 highlights

Inspired

- **5,630 children** through Sea Champion staff and volunteers' delivery of interactive education workshops on pollution, fishing and biodiversity.
- **130 primary and secondary school pupils** in Suffolk through a 6 week community action learning project focussed on marine litter.
- **845 people to take part in our Plastic Challenge** and find ways to avoid using single use plastic in June.



Informed

- **An estimated audience of 861 million** through 3,887 features in print media, national and regional radio and TV.
- **Over 218,000 consumers** on sustainable seafood choices via the MCS Pocket Good Fish Guide and smart phone apps, and over 44,000 users a month about sustainable seafood choices via the Good Fish Guide website.
- **Naturalists, academics and conservation organisations** about marine life and habitats by adding 1,400 site records and 50,000 species records to the 450,000 Seasearch records on the National Biodiversity Network website.



Involved

- **6,035 volunteers** in the UK-wide annual MCS Great British Beach Clean collecting 277,354 items of litter from 340 beaches over one weekend.
- **6,300 volunteers** in the fourth annual Big Beach Clean Up in partnership with Marks & Spencer, clearing approximately 40 tonnes of beach litter from 129 beaches and waterways with a media reach of over 41.5 million.
- **His Royal Highness and MCS President, The Prince of Wales** and the Duchess of Cornwall in an Oceans Plastic Awareness Day, highlighting the impacts of and solutions to plastic pollution alongside over 20 NGOs and businesses.



Influenced

- **525 Sea Champion volunteers** to give 18,726 hours of their time including delivery of 291 beach cleans and 100 community talks and events.
- **Hundreds of primary and secondary school pupils** in Cool Seas Investigators projects seeking solutions to the challenge of marine litter.



- **Designation of 23 Marine Conservation Zones** in English waters in January 2016, in addition to the 27 designated in 2014.
- **Scottish Government** to introduce progressive fisheries management measures to better protect 20 at-risk inshore sites (MPAs and SACs) from trawling (over 2,200km² protected) and dredging (over 2,600km² protected), including sites supported by Seasearch data (e.g. South Arran, Loch Sunart and Lochs Duich, Long and Alsh).
- **Introduction of emergency measures by European Member States** to reduce sea bass catches to prevent the collapse of the stock.



- **Welsh Government** to make amends to the draft Environment Bill to ensure more robust duties for Natural Resources Wales and increase biodiversity protection within the Bill.
- **Introduction of a carrier bag levy** in England in October 2015.
- **The EU Commission** to introduce strict management measures to try and reverse the overfishing of sea bass.
- **Certification of over 800,000 tonnes of farmed fish** as being responsibly farmed to internationally recognised standards.



Protecting marine life

2020 Vision

Establish an ecologically coherent UK network of well-managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

MCS has worked hard to make sure that the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 are properly implemented, having played a leading role in the campaigns to introduce these vital laws that will enable our seas to be better protected. During the year MCS was the beneficiary of a generous legacy from the Miles Blackwell Trust which is dedicated to continuing our work on Marine Protected Areas. We are embarking on a major new UK-wide campaign to secure the establishment and effective management of vital MPAs where wildlife can both recover and flourish.

Establishing Marine Conservation Zones in England

MCS continues to push for a network of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in English waters. 27 MCZs were designated in 2014, and in January 2015 Defra consulted on a second tranche of 23 sites - far fewer than the 37 sites originally proposed.



Juvenile black sea bream at Studland



Short-snouted seahorse

Following detailed consultation responses from MCS and other stakeholders, all 23 MCZs were designated in January 2016, bringing the total to 50. MCS is using public pressure and engaging with Defra and its agencies to ensure that the third tranche of MCZs (to be consulted/designated 2017-18) fulfils the governmental commitment to establish an ecologically coherent network.

20,450 km² of English waters are now designated Marine Conservation Zones - that's an area 3x the size of Devon



MCS is working with several regional Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) to inform and influence MCZ management measures. Following the film-based Community Voice Method (CVM) project in 2014-15, the Sussex IFCA

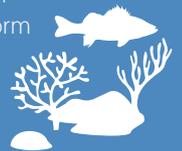


Cuckoo wrasse at Eddystone North

has developed a suite of management measures for MCZs at Kingmere (a spawning site for black bream) and Beachy Head West (a fragile chalk habitat with short-snouted seahorse). Owing to the success of this project, MCS will repeat it in 2016 with Eastern IFCA.

MCS is co-ordinating a project with Cornwall IFCA and the University of Exeter to analyse the impact of closures to bottom-towed fishing gears on seabed recovery in the Eddystone reef Special Area of Conservation.

MCS has influenced discussions for managing the Folkestone Pomerania MCZ which may result in a total exclusion of bottom-towed fishing from the site. This will benefit fragile species such as honeycomb worm and ross worm, as well as fishermen using less damaging gears.



Establishing Marine Protected Areas in Scotland

Following our successful push to get 30 new MPAs designated in July 2014, securing effective management of both new MPAs and existing SACs was the next priority and MCS has led the Save Scottish Seas partnership to help achieve these management measures.

A suite of progressive management measures to control trawling and dredging in the most vulnerable inshore sites (MPAs and SACs) was announced in June 2015. This followed our successful collaborative #DontTakeTheP campaign. MCS led concerted advocacy to ensure the proposals withstood organised opposition. Thanks to this and the support of Seasearch data, over 2,200 km² of offshore waters are protected from bottom-towed mobile gear and over 2,600 km² of inshore waters are protected from mechanical dredging.

MCS in Scotland continues to contribute to stakeholder workshops in establishing management options for offshore MPAs and SACs, lower risk inshore SACs and MPAs and potential forthcoming seabird SPAs, to ensure strong protection for vulnerable species and habitats.



4,800 km² of Scottish waters are now protected from damaging activities

Marine Protected Areas in Wales

There have been several key consultations and legislative changes during the year. MCS has challenged a proposal to open up areas of Cardigan Bay SAC to scallop dredging. Our supporters contributed to more than 6,000 responses received by Welsh Government. MCS also facilitated the sending of over 2,000 letters in support of extensions to European Marine Sites in England and Wales in Spring 2016. We await the outcomes from both actions.



Queen scallop



Orange clubbed sea slug

Effective Protection for European Marine Sites (EMS)

MCS, along with colleagues from ClientEarth, successfully challenged Defra to adopt a new approach to managing potentially damaging activities within European Marine Sites in 2012. This resulted in the formation of an Implementation Group on which MCS has a key seat. Discussions have progressed this year on protection for high and medium risk habitats that would be severely or moderately impacted by bottom towed fishing gear, e.g. sandbanks and reefs, leading to stronger conservation targets for these habitats.

MCS is sharing what we have learnt from this successful challenge and continuing to work with partners and colleagues across Europe, which may result in their being able to take similar action and protect more of our neighbouring sea areas.

Marine Wildlife Recording

MCS co-ordinates the Seasearch project to train volunteer divers to gather marine habitat and species data throughout the UK and 2015-16 was another active year, with over 1,400 site records and 50,000 species records gathered. Seasearch continued to target existing and proposed marine protected areas and data has been made available to partners, including the government conservation agencies and the general public through the National Biodiversity Network and Seasearch websites. Given that lack of evidence is a frequent reason for not designating new marine protected areas, this project is vital to support protection of UK seas.



Big Seaweed Search

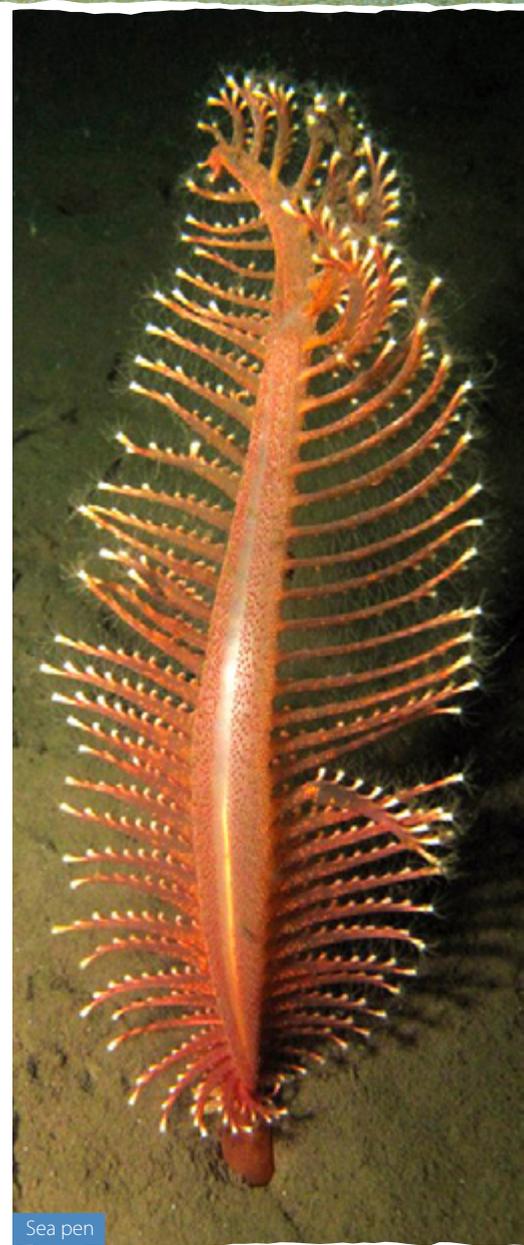
Seasearch divers gathered
**1,400 site records and
50,000 species records**



Bladder wrack seaweed at Wembury

MCS developed two new citizen science partnerships over the last year, engaging the public and making them active ambassadors for monitoring our marine life. MCS is a key delivery organisation for the national Capturing our Coast marine identification and recording initiative run by Newcastle University.

We have partnered with the Natural History Museum on the Big Seaweed Search to be launched in June 2016. In 2015, MCS received another record number of jellyfish reports, with nearly 1,700 received through the year.



Sea pen

Sustainable aquaculture and fisheries



2020 Vision

Recovery of depleted fisheries, and minimisation of impacts of wild capture fisheries and fish farming on habitats, non-target species and ecosystems.

Increased availability, and consumption, of sustainably wild caught and responsibly farmed seafood in the UK.

In 2015, the European Commission reported an increase in the proportion of assessed fish stocks that are overfished in the North East Atlantic and in the Mediterranean. Approximately half of EU stocks are data deficient and have unknown status. Globally, approximately 29% of assessed stocks are overfished, with the number that are underexploited reducing – now just 9% of global fisheries have any room for expansion.

Increases in overfished stocks

	N.E. Atlantic	Mediterranean
2014	41%	91%
2016	48%	96%

Influencing Sustainable European Fisheries Management

The reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) has been a key opportunity to shape the future of fisheries and aquaculture around a new vision for sustainable ecosystem based fisheries management. Whilst not perfect, the agreement of the European Parliament and Council in 2013 for the new Common Fisheries Policy presents a better deal for our seas, fish and fishers, which MCS worked tirelessly to achieve.

Since this landmark outcome, MCS has engaged with UK and European government bodies to influence the crucial early stages of CFP implementation. MCS is a representative on both the North Sea Advisory Council (NSAC) and North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC), where measures to implement the CFP are developed. In these capacities, MCS has contributed to several consultations on the implementation of the landing obligation to reduce discards, which, as of 2015, is in place for pelagic fisheries and has now commenced being phased in for demersal fisheries.



Fishmonger signage

Sea bass stocks are in serious decline because of fishing pressures and limited numbers of young sea bass.

MCS successfully lobbied for a package of measures for the recovery of sea bass in 2015, working with fishermen, the government and EU contacts to highlight the stock's status and influence the UK government to push the European Commission for emergency measures to protect the spawning stock.

Biomass of spawning sea bass is in decline



MCS remains a strong advocate for sustainable inshore fisheries management in Scotland, playing a role in the Celtic Seas Partnership (CSP), as well as advocating the environmental and socio-economic value of spatial management of fishing to the Rural Affairs, Food and Environment Secretary (at the time), Richard Lochhead. MCS also contributed to the Clyde 2020 Steering Group and, in lead capacity for the LINK Save Scottish Seas project,

commissioned the University of Glasgow to undertake a study of the status of seafloor integrity in Scotland's seas to inform better management in future.



Sea bass

Developing Sustainable Aquaculture

The way fish are farmed creates a number of conservation issues. Salmon and trout, (both farmed in the UK), and warm-water prawn, sea bass, bream and pangasius all depend on fish oil and fishmeal in their diet, originally sourced from wild fish. Other ingredients used for feed include vegetable oils and proteins such as soya, which also come with a host of environmental concerns.

Approximately five million tonnes of "trash fish" are caught in South East Asia to feed species such as warm-water

prawns and pangasius. These fisheries have little or no management measures in place leading to fisheries collapse, ecosystem damage and social impacts. MCS has formed partnerships with international trade associations, fish farmers, feed manufacturers and retailers to promote and support development of improvement in Asian fisheries and promote alternative, non-marine feeds. MCS played a key role on the governing board of the International Fishmeal and Fish Oil Organisation (IFFO) Responsible Supply Standard which develops and administers an international standard to assess sourcing and production of fishmeal and fish oil.

45% of global fish meal and fish oil are certified as responsibly produced by IFFO standards – increased from 40% in 2013

MCS holds a place on the Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) Standards Oversight Committee, whose role is to oversee the development, implementation and formation of global aquaculture production standards, as well as advise on

the strategic development of GAA. A further 300,000 tonnes of farmed seafood were certified by GAA bringing the total certified tonnage to over 730,000 tonnes, which is about 1% of all global aquaculture.



In 2015 MCS advised the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas on the development of their aquaculture programme. MCS also led the development of a collaborative European NGO position paper on the sustainability of aquaculture feeds to help drive the achievement of responsible development of aquaculture in Europe.

Providing Sustainable Seafood Advice

The MCS Good Fish Guide website, printed pocket Good Fish Guide and smart phone app - including the Fish to Eat and Fish to Avoid Lists - remain the key information source on sustainable seafood for the UK

public, chefs, suppliers and retailers. Over 1,500,000 pocket Good Fish Guides have been distributed since its launch in 2004, and in February 2016 nearly 500,000 were printed with the latest seafood ratings to meet rapidly growing demand.

The Good Fish Guide website provides advice to UK consumers and industry on over 150 species of seafood, for over 650 different fisheries and farm types. This year saw a significant increase in the number of fisheries and farmed seafood species being assessed, adding another five farmed sources to reflect the diversifying UK tastes. The MCS ratings methodology now underpins ratings



Putting the Good Fish Guide 2016 to use

maintained by Cornwall Wildlife Trust on their Cornwall Good Seafood Guide, which has further expanded the size of the MCS ratings database in 2015-16.

In 2015-16, MCS – with support from food service company, Compass - improved its Good Fish Guide smart phone app to massively increase functionality and improve the user experience. Along with seafood ratings which can be filtered, users can now view recipes, information on seasonality and labelling, and find Fish2Fork rated restaurants in their vicinity.

Influencing Seafood Businesses

MCS' work with businesses has focussed on removing sources of seafood that we rate as Fish to Avoid from sale by supermarkets and suppliers. Marks & Spencer, the Co-op, Waitrose and Sainsbury's have already adopted such



policies and in 2015 Morrison's also included commitments not to source new seafood that appears on the MCS Fish to Avoid list. MCS continues regular dialogue with the largest seafood retailer, Tesco, as well as Iceland, regarding their sourcing policies and sale of Fish to Avoid to further increase the market share of UK seafood sold that is from sustainable sources.

MCS has developed a new partnership with Compass, and a close working relationship with Brakes. Both companies have made impressive sustainable seafood commitments based on MCS ratings, and through working closely with them, MCS has improved the implementation and monitoring of these commitments.

MCS continues to co-ordinate and judge the Good Catch Award for sustainable seafood as part of the National Fish & Chip Awards.

MCS advice influenced many restaurants, caterers, schools and Councils to not source any fish from the MCS Fish to Avoid list through our work with Sustainable Fish Cities, Fish2Fork, the Sustainable Restaurant Association and the Soil Association 'Food For Life' catering mark, which now covers over half of all primary schools and over a third of all schools in the UK.



During the year, MCS commenced a partnership with the organisation campaigning for restaurants to use only sustainable seafood products, Fish2Fork. In a joint project funded by the Oak Foundation and MAVA Foundation, 12 major high street restaurant chains were assessed and the ratings publicly launched, resulting in significant media interest and several restaurants improving their policies and practices. MCS and Fish2Fork are developing a joint strategy to make the UK the first sustainable seafood nation where seafood from all market sectors is sustainably sourced.

Through the collaborative 'Point the Fish Finger' initiative led by Sustain, MCS played a major role in influencing Bella Italia, Café Rouge and JD Wetherspoon to improve their seafood sourcing performance and to adopt the Sustainable Fish City pledge, underpinned by MCS ratings.

Clean seas and beaches



2020 Vision

Reduced litter and bathing water pollution at UK beaches.

The MCS Beachwatch and Good Beach Guide campaigns are the authoritative voice on how litter and sewage affect Britain's seas and beaches and how individuals, Government and industry must act to reduce pollution around our coastline.

Reducing Litter at Source

MCS has run its Beachwatch beach litter survey and clean up programme since 1994, and the flagship event, the Great British Beach Clean has continued to deliver staggering results. A record-breaking 6,035 volunteers attended 340 beaches around the UK, including 75 beaches in Scotland, over one weekend in September 2015. Volunteers collected 277,354 litter items with an average of 3,298 items of litter per km of beach, sadly a record high since surveys began. This shows that we must do even more to reverse the trend. The fourth Big Beach Clean Up with MCS partners, Marks & Spencer, involved 6,300 volunteers in clearing 4,200 bags of litter from 129 beaches and waterways during one week in May 2015. This year, MCS ran corporate team beach cleans involving over 200 staff from companies and organisations including TSB, Lloyds, BlackRock and the University of the West of England.

A record 12,535 volunteers cleaned beaches with MCS

Data gathered by MCS volunteers is used by MCS to lobby the UK Government and devolved administrations to take concerted action on the issue. As a result of MCS influence, marine litter is one of 11 descriptors in the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive. MCS advises development of the descriptor targets through the EU Technical Working Group on Marine Litter and is also carrying out the UK's monitoring responsibility for beach litter under the Oslo/Paris Convention (OSPAR).



Microplastics on our beaches

In a move that recognises the robustness of MCS Beachwatch monitoring and the uniqueness and reliability of the data gathered, Defra commissioned MCS to

monitor litter on 15 selected beaches around the UK, using Beachwatch methodology, to measure compliance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) litter target (“a visible reduction in litter on beaches”). MCS staff and volunteers are submitting data to Defra from the selected beaches four times per year until 2018.

MCS has long called on Government to provide leadership and co-ordinate litter reduction initiatives. In 2015, Defra and the Department for Communities and Local Government committed to producing a Litter Strategy for England. MCS is represented on the Litter Strategy Advisory Group and has ensured the inclusion of aquatic litter in all future discussions on the strategy. MCS sits on the Scottish Government's Marine Litter Strategy Steering Group, and has helped develop a timeline for its implementation and to co-ordinate reporting among members.

The Marine Litter Action Network (MLAN) brought together over 60 organisations and individuals to collectively identify solutions to tackle marine litter. MLAN held a celebration of our first year at M&S London offices on World Oceans Day 2015, launching our impact report covering “How a year can make a difference”.

MCS provided the communications hub for MLAN members, sharing information through the year about new litter reduction initiatives and project developments.

MCS President, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales has long been an advocate for innovative solutions to waste management and in July 2016, together with Surfers against Sewage, MCS organised an Oceans Plastic Awareness day at Fistral Beach in Cornwall. The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall met with over 20 representatives from businesses and organisations to hear about the impacts of plastic litter and see some initiatives reducing litter at source.



Litter found at Porthtowan beach clean

Plastic carrier bags are a powerful symbol of disposable single-use plastic products, and carrier bag charges are an effective incentive to reduce their use.

MCS has influenced carrier bag charging in Wales (October 2012), Northern Ireland (April 2013) and Scotland (October 2014). MCS' joint campaign with NGO partners in the Break the Bag Habit coalition finally met with success in England, with a carrier bag charge introduced in October 2015. Unfortunately, there are a number of exemptions in England for small retailers which even retail associations objected to, alongside MCS. Plastic bag charges have consistently resulted in a significant reduction in their use, with an 80% reduction in Scotland within six months and early indications that the same pattern will follow in England.

The number of bottles found in our 2015 Great British Beach Clean went up in almost every part of the UK compared to the previous year. 99 bottles were found, on average, per kilometre cleaned – a relative increase of 43%. MCS supports calls for a Deposit Return System (DRS) which would give a financial incentive to return plastic drinks bottles. In Scotland, as a partner in the 'Have You Got The Bottle' campaign, we helped organise a

parliamentary event, with 129 bottles from Firth of Forth beaches that MSPs could use in a 'reverse vending machine'. MCS responded to the Scottish Government's call for evidence on DRS and as a result of 'Have You Got The Bottle' input, support for a DRS was included in three party manifestos before elections in May 2016.

MCS is a partner in the international Beat the Microbead campaign, and launched a UK focused campaign, Scrub it Out!, with partners Fauna and Flora International. Over 3,000 members of the public have pledged to buy only microplastic-free personal care products, and we have succeeded in securing public



Plastic bottle beach litter

commitments to phase out microplastic ingredients from major UK retailers and manufacturers. In 2016 MCS joined forces with Greenpeace, Fauna and Flora International and the Environmental Investigation Agency to push for a ban on microbeads in personal care products.

Over 3,000 people pledged to scrub out personal care products containing microplastics, potentially equating to over 6 million fewer microbeads in the ocean every day



To raise awareness about sewage related debris, which makes up over 6% of the litter found on UK beaches, MCS worked with an advertising agency, Hopkins & Jackson, on a pro-bono basis to develop a new campaign - 'Wet Wipes Turn Nasty When You Flush Them'. Wet wipes are often labelled as flushable, even though they do not pass water company flushability standards. We have liaised closely with water companies and WaterUK to develop a campaign to be launched in 2016.

With the help of our supporters, MCS has encouraged many event organisers to change plans for balloon releases and celebrate in other ways instead. Over 40 Local Authorities have now banned balloon and sky lantern releases on council-owned land.

In Wales, MCS gave evidence and supported a petition to ban polystyrene fast food wrappers and called on Welsh Government to expand this to all single-use fast food waste. MCS was contracted to complete a scoping study on the feasibility of a 'Fishing for Litter' project on the Llyn Peninsula.

Engaging the public in positive actions that they can take part in as individuals is a key part of our programmes, and the MCS Plastic Challenge was undertaken in June 2015 with support from Brita, to encourage members of the public to go plastic free for the whole month, inspiring 845 people to take part.

Clean seas for all to enjoy

MCS has published the Good Beach Guide since 1987, providing information on the water quality and sewage discharges at over 700 UK beaches. The 2015 Guide was launched in May and included a projection of new revised bathing water standards for



Sand Bay beach clean with M&S

the first time. This was a fantastic milestone which marked the end of the use of outdated and inadequate water quality standards. The new more stringent, health related standards are a big improvement and address our concerns with the old monitoring system. This means that we will not be continuing our own MCS Recommended water quality standard. Instead we will be promoting the use of the revised bathing water standards, and those beaches which are of 'Excellent' or 'Good' quality, and advising people to use these, along with the daily pollution forecasts, when deciding where and when to go in the sea.

In the 2015 Guide we reported on the results from the previous summer, with 93% of bathing waters meeting at least the new

'Sufficient' standard and 83% achieving the higher 'Excellent' or 'Good' standard.

As well as improving the information for water quality in the Guide we launched a new format which makes it easier to find information that now includes wildlife sightings, beach cleans and daily water quality forecasts.

MCS has promoted the value of clean bathing waters through a number of initiatives to influence and support national and regional improvements in water quality, including the Cleaner Seas Forum in England; Dwr Cymru's Independent Environment Advisory Panel; the Bathing Water Review Panel in Scotland; and the European Bathing Water Directive Expert Group.

Engaging our audiences



2020 Vision

Increased public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of UK seas and active involvement in their conservation.

The MCS public engagement programme focuses on activities that will help people have a clear understanding of the diversity and value of the marine environment and feel a lifelong connection with our seas, shores and wildlife. We inspired people to take action to safeguard our seas for their own benefit and for future generations, and make the most of opportunities to get out and enjoy the coast and sea.

Inspiring the next generation

Alongside growth of the Cool Seas website, this year saw the development of the Cool Seas Investigators (CSI) project: our community-action learning initiative aimed at upper primary and secondary school pupils. The CSI Beachwatch pilot project involved over 100 pupils in Suffolk exploring the problem of marine litter. CSI Beachwatch aims to raise young people's awareness of the issue of litter in the marine environment. Through first hand exploration of this global issue, participants are supported to develop connections with their local environment and community to instigate local behaviour change.

Working with our Sea Champions network, we have been able to train 60 volunteers to deliver our Cool Seas workshops to primary schools and UK Scouts and Brownies groups.

Sea Champions

Thanks to funding from Marks & Spencer through the Forever Fish partnership, the MCS Sea Champions volunteer engagement and community outreach programme continued to grow during its fourth year. We cannot thank our volunteers enough for supporting all operational aspects of MCS to help us achieve our goals.

The South and South East, North West and Wales Local Groups continue to promote MCS activities and run a programme of local events to inspire interest and support for marine conservation, with events in Wales supported by Environment Wales funding.

Publicity

MCS's reach to people throughout the UK via the media has been substantial, and the charity's activities were reported widely. MCS experts gave comment on many topics including North Sea cod stock recovery, beach litter surveys, microplastics and wildlife sightings, and informed interviews on events such as beaching sperm whales to reported sightings of invasive fish.

Digital channels have become increasingly important, with recipients of our newsletter increasing by 12,596 and response rates to our calls for

Since its launch in 2012, **525 volunteers** had become active ambassadors for marine conservation in their local area and the **Sea Champions** programme had delivered:

 **18,726** volunteer hours of support for MCS including **2,008** hours from office Sea Champions

 Attended **579 community outreach events** and talks, engaging with over **100,000 people** 

Delivered formal and informal **learning sessions to over 5,630 young people** from primary school to university level 

and they cleaned  **672 beaches**

action remaining very high. MCS websites continued to attract high volumes of traffic, and the sites have been optimised for mobile and other hand held device users.

 **90,000 Facebook fans**
21,000 Twitter followers

79,462 recipients of our **Enews** 

 **551,267 unique visitors** to our websites

3,887 print, online and broadcast **articles** with an advertising value equivalent of **£11.6 million** 



Kids love Larry the Lobster, our mascot

“An informative and engaging workshop perfectly aimed at the age of the children. All the children involved in the activities really enjoyed themselves and we have all learnt a lot!” Trellech Primary School

Marine conservation *beyond the UK and Europe*

Whilst the UK is an island nation, we rely on international trade, including imported seafood and other marine products. In addition, with its 14 Overseas Territories, the United Kingdom is responsible for the fifth largest area of ocean in the world, measuring 6.8 million square kilometres, over twice the size of India and nearly 30 times the size of the UK itself. This means that to achieve our vision of seas fit for life, with improved biodiversity, healthier fish stocks and less pollution, we must undertake work beyond the UK and Europe.

Our current international work focuses on areas of conservation where UK interests are directly involved, such as in the spectacular and internationally important Overseas Territories (UKOTs), through UK market influences, or where MCS is a partner in a fully funded project.



Turtle tagging in Turks and Caicos

MCS is one of five NGOs in the Marine Reserves Coalition GB Oceans campaign calling for at least 30% of UKOTs to be designated as fully protected Marine Reserves. Britain's territories host the clearest water ever recorded, the largest coral atoll in the world, more penguins than any other nation, and breeding grounds for globally endangered turtles. These fragile and unique ecosystems face increasing threat from excessive, as well as illegal pirate fishing, pollution and climate change. Left unchallenged, unsustainable human activity in these waters will cause irreparable harm to these extraordinary marine ecosystems and the threatened species they support.

MCS provided political and parliamentary backing to the campaign to gain support from MPs for the designation of these sites. In March 2015 the Coalition Government committed to designate the world's largest fully protected marine reserve, covering 834,000 km², around the Pitcairn Islands in the South Pacific Ocean. In January 2016, they also committed to designate a Marine Reserve off Ascension, which under current plans, will cover 234,291 km² (around 50% of Ascension's waters), making it the only large-scale marine reserve in the Atlantic.

Turtle Conservation

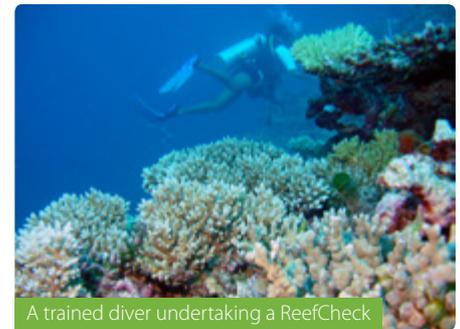
MCS's Turks and Caicos Islands Turtle Project carried out a further two turtle satellite tag attachments in April 2015. The tags add to the study, led by MCS, of sub-adult green turtle behaviour, with 13 sub-adult green turtles successfully tracked to date. To build on outreach, MCS distributed 'size matters' t-shirts and has partnered with the Lempen Puppet Theatre and the Turks and Caicos Islands Friends of the Arts Foundation (TCFAF) to bring a puppet theatre to the island in April 2016.



Tagging in our 'size matters' campaign t-shirt



Releasing a tagged green turtle



A trained diver undertaking a ReefCheck



A reef being surveyed in Musandam

MCS continues to undertake ReefCheck training and surveys in Oman and the Maldives providing local individuals with scholarships. Surveys were carried out in areas heavily affected by bleaching in 1998, as a result of El Nino, to record recovery (in more exposed reefs), and declines (in more sheltered reefs), some of which have been catastrophically affected.

Destructive Fishing

MCS continued its collaboration with Sabah Parks to promote conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of resources in the Tun Sakaran Marine Park in Sabah, Malaysia. Our main area of work has been to strengthen the capacity of the Park Management Authority to eliminate destructive fishing. We're urgently addressing the problem of fish bombing that has caused so much destruction to coral reefs and marine life in the area. The University of St Andrew's St Andrews Instrumentation Ltd (SAIL) have provided technical expertise for the development of an acoustic detection system, and we have successfully deployed hydrophones and been able to detect and locate the position of bombs.



Coral frame 3 months after seeding



Healthy coral growth after just 2 years



Coral frame array in a fish bombed area

Britain's territories host the clearest water ever recorded...



the largest coral atoll in the world...

more penguins than any other nation...



breeding grounds for globally endangered turtles





Acknowledgement of financial and other support

The Marine Conservation Society would like to thank all the individuals and organisations that have supported the Society's work in the period to 31st March 2016.

Organisations, companies, charitable trusts and foundations giving grants of £1,000 or more towards specific conservation projects:

- British Chelonia Group
- C R Hotel Ltd
- Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
- Compass Contract Services UK Ltd
- The Craignish Trust
- Defra
- Defra Darwin Initiative
- Eccles Family Trust
- Edinburgh Council
- Environment Wales
- The Gerald Micklem Trust
- Geraldine Kirkpatrick Charitable Trust
- Gwynedd Council
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- J & JR Wilson Trust
- John Ellerman Foundation
- Keep Scotland Beautiful
- The Kestrelman Trust
- The Lighthouse Foundation
- MAVA Foundation
- The Michael Marks Charitable Trust
- Miles Blackwell Trust
- Monterey Bay Aquarium
- Natural England
- Natural Resources Wales
- People's Postcode Lottery
- The Pigshed Trust
- Plastics Europe AISL
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Sabah Parks
- Scottish Environment Link
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Sea Life London Aquarium
- Seas at Risk
- Selfridges
- Suffolk County Council
- Turcan Connell
- Turks & Caicos Reef Fund
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action
- Whitley Animal Protection Trust
- Zoological Society London

Organisations and companies supporting MCS with contributions of £1,000 or more in unrestricted funds:

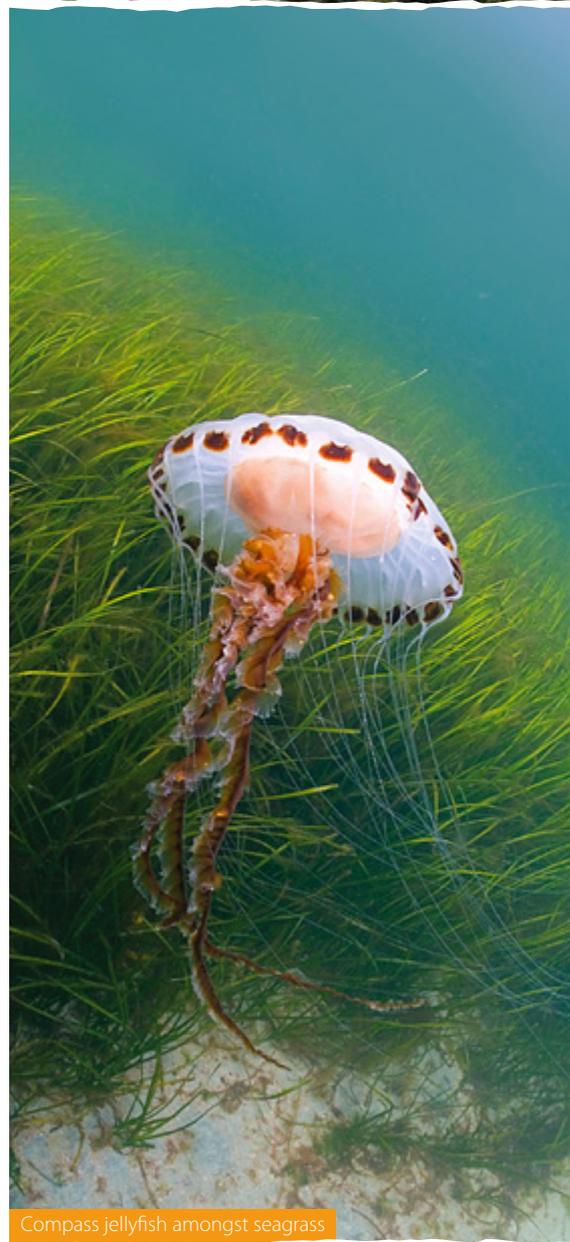
- Abel & Cole
- Adnams Brewery
- Ark Syndicate Management Ltd
- BlackRock
- CSL Europe Ltd
- Debenhams plc
- Fish4Dogs
- From the Notebook
- The Glenmorangie Company Ltd
- Grain Branding & Design Ltd
- Green Insurance Company
- Green People Ltd
- Haddenham Healthcare Ltd
- Harbour & Jones Ltd
- Haven Holidays
- Immediate Media
- M&J Seafood
- Mad Ball Fund
- Marks & Spencer plc
- PwC UK
- Richard Bramble
- Rudding Gates
- Salt-Water Sandals
- Simon Davenport Associates
- SuperGroup plc
- Yo! Sushi



Charitable and company trusts giving a donation of £500 or more:

- ▣ A & N Daniell Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Anson Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Barker Charitable Trust
- ▣ Benham Charitable Settlement
- ▣ The Blair Foundation
- ▣ The Bryan Guinness Charity Trust Ltd
- ▣ The Calleva Foundation
- ▣ Chapman Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Christopher Laing Foundation
- ▣ David Uri Memorial Trust
- ▣ The Dulverton Trust
- ▣ Gamma Trust
- ▣ The George A Moore Foundation
- ▣ The Gilbert & Eileen Edgar Foundation
- ▣ The Golden Bottle Trust
- ▣ The Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Hawthorne Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Henhurst Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Henry C Hoare Charitable Trust
- ▣ The John Cowan Foundation
- ▣ The Joseph Strong Frazer Trust
- ▣ The Lady Hind Trust
- ▣ Langdale Trust
- ▣ The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust
- ▣ Marsh Christian Trust
- ▣ Millichope Foundation
- ▣ Miss K. M. Harbinson's Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Mitchell Trust
- ▣ The Mollie Croysdale Charitable Trust
- ▣ N. Smith Charitable Settlement
- ▣ The Norman Family Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Oakdale Trust
- ▣ The Paul Bassham Charitable Trust
- ▣ Peacock Charitable Trust
- ▣ People's Postcode Lottery
- ▣ The Percy Hedley 1990 Charitable Trust
- ▣ Pilkington General Trust
- ▣ Postcode Animal Trust
- ▣ The Ratcliff Foundation
- ▣ Reuben Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Rhododendron Trust
- ▣ Schroder Charity Trust
- ▣ The Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust
- ▣ Simon Gibson Charitable Trust
- ▣ The Society of Biopurchase
- ▣ The Spear Charitable Trust
- ▣ The St Mary's Charity Trust
- ▣ Tay Charitable Trust
- ▣ Tyldesley Charitable Settlement
- ▣ The Tyneholme Trust
- ▣ The William Dean Trust
- ▣ Woodpeckers Trust
- ▣ The Wyndham Charitable Trust

MCS also expresses its gratitude to the many trusts who granted other donations or wish to remain anonymous.



Compass jellyfish amongst seagrass



Legacies

Donations were gratefully received in memory of:
Michael John Barnes, John Collier, Dan Davison, John Farlow,
Neil Fears, Constance Firth, Kenneth Garbett, B Howlett,
Maria Hutchinson, Ian Irvine, Derek Jones, John Lamerton,
Thomas Lilley, Samantha Paxton, Michael Smith.

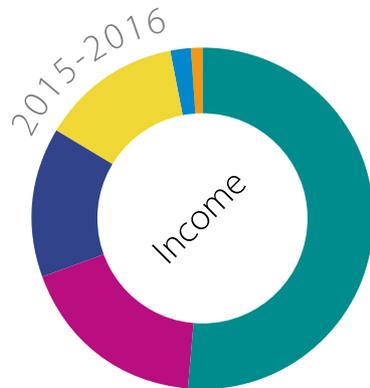
Patrons, supporters, members and groups

MCS would like to thank all its members, Local Groups and Sea Champion volunteers for their support of our conservation activities and fundraising effort over the year. Thanks also to all the volunteers who supported MCS projects and/or gathered vital information through Beachwatch, Big Beach Clean Up, Great British Beach Clean, Seasearch, Jellyfish, Basking Shark and Turtle Watch. Also to the many individual and community participants, dive clubs, sports clubs, youth and member organisations and school and college students who raised money to support the work of the Marine Conservation Society.



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Income and expenditure



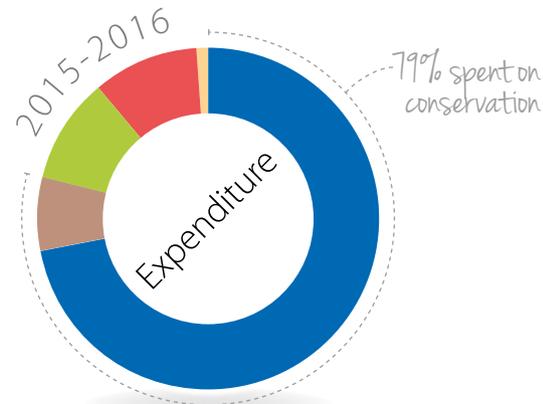
Donations and legacies	51 %
Royalties, appeals and other fundraising	18 %
Grant income	14 %
Subscriptions and fees receivable	13 %
Investment and trading income	2 %
Educational and promotional income	1 %

The past year has seen significant support for MCS' vision of Seas Fit for Life, with people taking over **1 million** actions for marine conservation as a direct consequence of our work.

In 2015-16 we raised £2,888,594 in new income and spent £2,630,708. The boost to our income in the year is thanks to the generous legacy from the Miles Blackwell Trust, restricted to our MPA work, and this means we are really well placed to start to deliver on our new and exciting '**Our Seas Our Future**' strategy, however these funds will be spent in 2016-17. In future years, with fewer funds to carry forward, our charity expenditure is forecast to exceed new income and

therefore MCS is dependent on continuing to source essential funds in order to sustain and develop the levels of activity that are vital for the huge changes in the marine environment that we alone are fighting for in our strategy.

MCS continues to strive to maintain sustainable income streams and develop our supporter network. Income from membership and adoptions continues to rise and a new seahorse adoption product was introduced for Christmas 2015, marketed in collaboration with The Seahorse Trust. We have continued to increase MCS profile and brand and effectively influence key political and industry stakeholders, whilst supporting a high-performing, motivated team of staff.



Conservation programmes	72 %
Membership recruitment and services	10 %
Fundraising costs of voluntary income	10 %
Educational and promotional costs	7 %
Investment and trading	1 %

In an nfpSynergy report on public trust in the charity sector, MCS was delighted to come out as the most trustworthy brand within the Environment and Conservation charities which were reviewed. We have published our 'fundraising promise' online and are continuously striving to improve the quality of our communications with people in an effective and engaging way.

We extend grateful thanks to all who supported our work so generously through the donation of time and money during the year.

Join Marine Conservation Society and help to save our seas

Our wonderful seas, shores and wildlife are under threat, but it's not too late. Thousands of people just like you are helping us ensure our rich marine life can be restored, that fish stocks can recover and our beaches and bathing waters can become clean once again.

...together we can achieve so much



To join visit

mcsuk.org/membership

or call us on 0300 3300 704



When you join you will receive a welcome pack full of information and gifts plus four issues of Marine Conservation magazine every year.



£5

a month will help us organise a community beach clean, helping to protect local wildlife from marine litter



£10

a month will help us promote sustainable seafood, reducing pressure on endangered fish species



£20

a month will help us survey and protect more turtles, most of which are critically endangered due to human activities



Marine Conservation Society

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Web: www.mcsuk.org  facebook.com/mcsuk  twitter.com/mcsuk

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