

North West Marine Ecosystems (NWME) Pilot Programme: An Invitation to Collaborate

The North West Marine Ecosystems (NWME) pilot is a new initiative to advance collaboration for regional marine and coastal research.

We are inviting academics, citizen scientists, and marine professionals to join in to share knowledge and shape a robust evidence base for informed management of the North West's marine environment.

Building on a proven model

This pilot builds on the success of the [South West Marine Ecosystems \(SWME\)](#) initiative and subsequent pilots such as East Marine Ecosystems (EastME) which had its [first conference](#) in 2024.

The North West Marine Ecosystems (NWME) aims to:

- Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration through Communities of Practice (CoPs) and thematic webinars.
- Synthesise diverse data sources, including citizen science and academic research, into a comprehensive *State of the North West Marine Ecosystem* report.
- Enhance understanding of marine and coastal ecosystem dynamics to inform decision-making at regional and national levels.

Why Participate?

A survey of participants in the [South West Marine Ecosystems \(SWME\)](#) reported valuing the following benefits:

- Information sharing (92%).
- Raised profile for regional marine issues (87%).
- Opportunities for networking and collaboration (80%).

Full report here: <https://swmecosystems.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Final-Report-SWME-Social-Science-Survey-Results.pdf>¹

Opportunities for Engagement

Participants in this programme will have the chance to:

- Join thematic working groups and contribute to focused discussions.
- Share data, research findings, and local observations with a diverse network of stakeholders.
- Co-create outputs that advance marine environmental monitoring and management.

¹ McQuatters-Gollop, A., Earll, B., Hiscock, K., Williams, R., Crosby, A., Naylor, P., Sayer, S., Proudfoot, R., Jones, M., & Nelson, M. (2024). *Who benefits from South-West Marine Ecosystems community, and how? Final Report: Social Science Survey Results*. Plymouth: University of Plymouth. Retrieved from <https://swmecosystems.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Final-Report-SWME-Social-Science-Survey-Results.pdf>.

Thematic working groups – Communities of Practice

Potential thematic groups include:

- Plastic pollution and litter
- Marine mammals
- Marine ecology
- Habitat restoration
- Birds
- Water quality
- Fish and fisheries
- Radioactive pollution
- Energy and development
- Plankton and benthic ecology
- Conservation and Marine Protected Areas
- Oceanography

Benefits of Participation

By participating, you can:

- **Advance Marine Science:**
Contribute to regional monitoring and foster long-term sustainability.
- **Build Your Network:**
Connect with a diverse group of professionals, researchers, and citizen scientists.
- **Shape Policy and Practice:**
Provide evidence that informs marine strategies, both locally and nationally.
- **Enhance Your Impact:**
Raise your profile and credibility within the marine science community.

Register your interest

[Sign up here](#) to participate, indicate your areas of interest and help shape the foundations of a more sustainable and resilient future for the North West's marine ecosystems.

Next Steps

We plan to run topic based webinars in 2025 and a Conference later in the year, funding dependent. As these are planned we'll be in touch with those who've registered.

This initiative is funded by Defra's Marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment programme (mNCEA) and managed by the EA through the Land-Sea Interface project.. The work is being taken forward by the North West Coastal Forum together with Ocean and Coastal Futures.

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