

RE: Sediment and water sampling - RRS Discovery - SeaSTORE project - Feb and July 2026

From navigation safety <navigationssafety@mcga.gov.uk>
 Date Thu 04/12/2025 16:27
 To Tim Whitton (Staff) <t.whitton@bangor.ac.uk>

Dear Tim,

Thank you for the information regarding the proposed sediment and water sampling from the RRS Discovery for the SeaStore project in the months of February and July 2026. We note that the works are sediment sampling using multicore, box core and SPI camera at 7 stations in each of the stated locations in the attached documents. This will involve drifting and dynamic positioning. We note that these are known fishing areas and the sampling strategies have been discussed with the master of the RRS Discovery. We also note that the stated locations are within busy vessel traffic routes.

For the Clyde sampling area only: We note that the works fall within the jurisdiction of a Statutory Harbour Authority (SHA), being Clyde Port Operations Ltd (Peel Ports) and therefore they are responsible for the safety of navigation within their waters. On the understanding that the following takes place, the MCA would have no significant concerns to raise with regards to the safety of navigation and would be satisfied that the risk is relatively low on this occasion:

1. All maritime safety legislation is complied with;
2. The site is within port limits and the applicant should gain the approval/agreement of the responsible local navigation authority or the Harbour Authority/Commissioners/Council. They may wish to issue local warnings to alert those navigating in the vicinity to the presence of the works, as deemed necessary.

For the other sampling areas:

On the understanding that the following takes place, the MCA would have no significant concerns to raise with regards to the safety of navigation and would be satisfied that the risk is relatively low on this occasion:

1. All maritime safety legislation is complied with (including COLREGS);
2. Local notification is issued to marine users, including [fishermen's organisations](#), relevant authorities and other local stakeholders, to ensure that they are made fully aware of the activity at least five days before commencement of the works;
3. [Zone31@hmcg.gov.uk](#), [Zone32@hmcg.gov.uk](#), and [Zone33@hmcg.gov.uk](#) must be notified prior to commencement of activities.
4. A notification must be sent to The Source Data Receipt team, UK Hydrographic Office (email: [sdr@ukho.gov.uk](#)) of commencement of the licensed activities, at least 10 days before commencement of the works. The information supplied must include the start date and end date, a description of the works, positions of the work area (WGS84), and details of any marking arrangements.
5. Consider whether there is sufficient available sea room for vessels to pass when your vessel is stationary to collect samples etc.
6. Survey vessel to inform any relevant VTS/MRS/MRCC if waiting for any reason where appropriate.
7. Consider a minimum working limit of horizontal visibility i.e not less than one (1) nautical mile.

Please can you confirm that you accept the above risk mitigations?

Kind regards,

Jo Cooke

Marine Licensing and Consenting

Advisor

UK Technical Maritime Services NavigationSafety@mcga.gov.uk

Navigation



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www.gov.uk/mca



From: Tim Whitton (Staff) <t.whitton@bangor.ac.uk>

Sent: 27 November 2025 16:28

To: navigation safety <navigationssafety@mcga.gov.uk>

Subject: Sediment and water sampling - RRS Discovery - SeaSTORE project - Feb and July 2026

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Dear MCGA

I writing to you regarding research activities that will occur from the [RRS Discovery](#) between 22nd February - 22nd March 2026 and 22nd July - August 17th 2026 in the Irish Sea, Clyde and offshore Northern Irish waters. We are in correspondence with THA, NLB and Irish Lights also regarding the Navigation and Hazard aspects of this work.

I seeking your confirmation or advice on if you consider the below activities to 'not cause an obstruction or danger to navigation'.

1. We will under take sediment sampling with multicore, box core and SPI camera in the areas shown in the attached documents. This will involve drifting and dynamic positioning. We have 7 stations we will sample at each site with multiple samples taken at each station. These are known fishing areas and the sampling strategies locations have been discussed with the master of the RRS Discovery.
2. Sampling the water column with towed instruments from the RRS Discovery behind an actively fishing vessel that is chartered for the project. Both the master of the RRS Discovery and the commercial fishing vessel will be in communication with each other and other nearby vessels.

Positions of the sediment sampling will be posted in the Kingfisher Bulletin and notice to mariners prior to the cruise, and we are working in collaboration with the Fishery Producer Organisations in the areas we are sampling in.

If you have any questions or need more information then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding the above.

Best regards

Tim

Dr Timothy Whitton

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rhywfaint o Gymraeg

Sylwch fy mod yn gweithio'n rhan amser ac

felly mae'n bosibl y bydd oedi wrth ymateb.

Dr Timothy Whitton

Post-Doctoral Ecologist Researcher
 School of Ocean Sciences

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Welsh

Please note I work part time and so replies may

be delayed.



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Mae croeso i chi gysylltu gyda'r Brifysgol yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

You are welcome to contact the University in Welsh or English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.

Rhif Elusen Gofrestredig 1141565 - Registered Charity No. 1141565

Gall y neges e-bost hon, ac unrhyw atodiadau a anfonwyd gyda hi, gynnwys deunydd cyfrinachol ac wedi eu bwriadu i'w defnyddio'n unig gan y sawl y cawsant eu cyfeirio ato (atynt). Os ydych wedi derbyn y neges e-bost hon trwy gamgymeriad, rhochwyd wybod i'r anfonwr ar unwaith a dilech y neges. Os na fwiadwyd anfon y neges atoch chi, rhaid i chi beidio a defnyddio, cadw neu ddatgelu unrhyw wybodaeth a gynhwysir ynddi. Mae unrhyw farn neu safbwynt yn eiddo i'r sawl a'i hanfonodd yn unig ac nid yw o anghenraid yn cynrychioli barn Prifysgol Bangor. Nid yw Prifysgol Bangor yn gwarantu bod y neges e-bost hon neu unrhyw atodiadau yn rhydd rhag ffyrssau neu 100% yn ddiogel. Oni bai fod hyn wedi ei ddatgan yn uniongyrchol yn nhestun yr e-bost, nid bwriad y neges e-bost hon yw ffurfio contract rhywymol - mae rhestr o lofnodwyr awdurdodedig ar gael o Swyddfa Cyllid Prifysgol Bangor.

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