

SHELL E&P IRELAND LIMITED

CORRIB FIELD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



Vessel Code of Conduct

**FOR VESSELS AND PERSONNEL OPERATING WITHIN
AND ADJACENT TO BROADHAVEN BAY SAC**

1 INTRODUCTION

The following protocol is based on a Code of Practice to protect small cetaceans in the Shannon Estuary and on Guidelines set up by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Marine Notice No 15). This Code of Conduct is designed to reduce the potential for construction vessel and person-related impacts on local marine mammal populations, their natural behaviour and habitats in Broadhaven Bay SAC, Co. Mayo, and along the remainder of the route of the Corrib export gas pipeline. This Code of Conduct refers only to all vessel traffic movements and geophysical (i.e. multibeam) surveys. If any other work, is required, then appropriate measures and suitable safety distances will need to be considered.

Under current National Legislation - S.I No. 94 of 1997, Natural Habitat Regulations, Cetaceans are listed, and regulations prohibit the deliberate disturbance of these species. Included are several measures proposed for the offshore and near shore construction vessels, which will be operating within the Broadhaven SAC and in other waters between the pipeline landfall and the Corrib Field. Craft that do encounter any species are encouraged to log all sightings and to advise officers of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, which is a division of the Department of Environment Heritage, and Local Government.

Marine mammal species likely to be encountered during works are: European otter (*Lutra lutra*), Grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*), Harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*), and various cetacean (i.e. whale and dolphin) species including Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), Common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) and Minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) (See: O’Cadhla et al., 2003; Englund et al., 2006).

This document includes the mitigation measures outlined in the EMP approval letters from Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources of 27th June 2008 (See Appendix 7).

2 RESTRICTIONS AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

All vessels approaching, leaving or working within or adjacent to Broadhaven Bay shall stay within the corridors shown on the accompanying Chart ‘Operating Corridors for Construction Vessels within the Region of Broadhaven Bay’ excepting the conditions of the additional guidelines 9 & 10 below. No corridors shall apply to work outside of Broadhaven Bay.

Section 3 outlines the guidelines to be followed for vessels engaged in Pipeline Protection works within and adjacent to Broadhaven Bay SAC.

Vessels undertaking acoustic surveys within and adjacent to Broadhaven Bay SAC must conform to guidelines relating to marine mammals in Section 4, in addition to the ten general guidelines listed below.

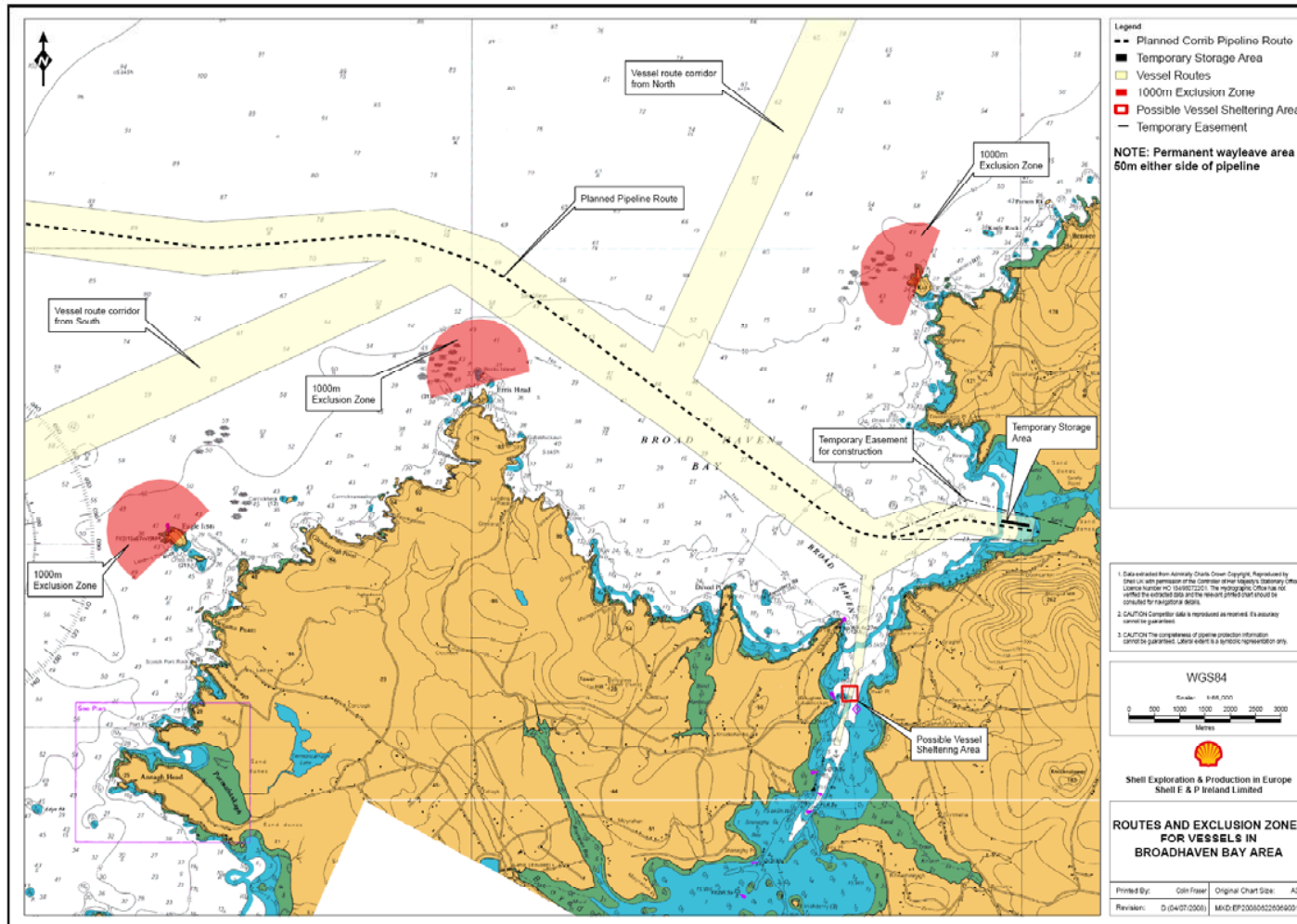
Listed below are additional guidelines to be followed to minimise the effects of the construction vessels on marine mammals:

1. Any vessel and/or person(s) shall attempt to maintain a minimum distance of 100m from any individual marine mammal or group thereof. Vessels that are themselves approached by marine mammals may remain but should gear their engines into Neutral providing this does not cause a safety hazard.
2. No vessel and/or person(s) shall approach or remain within 100m of any marine mammal(s) at any time for more than 30 minutes. Boats do not need to move off if they have been approached by the mammal. However in the case where a boat is working or otherwise the behaviour of marine mammals should be recorded and provided to Coastal and Marine Resources Centre (CMRC) personnel, especially in the event of a change in the conduct of work on or immediately surrounding the vessel.
3. No vessel shall, when less than 100m from the marine mammal(s), exceed a speed of 5 knots. Providing this does not cause a safety hazard.
4. No vessel shall alter speed or course suddenly when less than 100m from any marine mammal(s).
5. No person or vessel shall deliberately approach to less than 100m from any marine mammal(s) situated on land except under licence from the Minister or unless approved to do so by the relevant authority.
6. Persons ashore that are approached by marine mammals shall carefully make the animal(s) aware of their presence and shall allow the animal(s) free access and ample opportunity to move into the water. Under no circumstances shall a person behave in an obtrusive or noisy manner around the animal(s).
7. No vessel shall use underwater acoustic transmitters, except navigational systems, when less than 1000m from any marine mammal.
8. No unauthorised divers should be allowed to enter the water within 100m of any marine mammal. This will be in the interest of health and safety of the divers as well as any marine mammal. Commercial divers should be aware that they might be approached by mammals during the course of their work.
9. Nothing in these guidelines shall operate to prohibit anything done for the preservation of life at sea or in the interests of public safety.
10. Nothing in these guidelines shall operate to restrict the obligations on persons and vessels to obey rules for the prevention of collision at sea and the regulations enacted by statutory Harbour Authorities.

References

- Marine Notice No. 15 of 2005. Guidelines for correct procedures when encountering whales and dolphins in Irish coastal waters. DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS, MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
- Ó Cadhla, O., Englund, A., Philpott, E., Mackey, M. and Ingram, S. 2003. Marine mammal monitoring in the waters of Broadhaven Bay & Northwest Mayo: 2001-2002. Report to Enterprise Energy Ireland, Ltd. Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, University College Cork. 74pp.
- Englund, A., Coleman, M. and Collins, C. 2006. Marine mammal monitoring in Broadhaven bay: June – September 2005. Project report to RSKENSR Group Plc. Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, University College Cork, Cork 40pp.

2.1 Operating Corridors for Construction Vessels within the Region of Broadhaven Bay



3 CONSTRUCTION VESSELS ENGAGED IN PIPELINE PROTECTION OPERATIONS WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO BROADHAVEN BAY SAC.

Such vessels must conform to the procedures relating to marine mammals listed below.

1. A qualified and experienced Marine Mammal Observer should be on board the vessel responsible for the sound source.
2. The MMO will carry out a 30-minute watch prior to commencement of rock placement to ensure that the area is clear of marine mammals. This start up can only be carried out during daylight hours.
3. Provided the start-up process, outlined in Point 2, has been implemented, there is no requirement for works to cease if a marine mammal approaches the works/vessel.
4. Construction and survey vessels operating outside Broadhaven Bay will have an MMO present in an advisory capacity. Should a situation arise whereby the MMO feels that a mammal may be under threat or in any danger, the MMO will decide on the best course of action in line with NPWS Guidelines.
5. The MMO must copy a report within 30 days of completion of the construction operations to the National Parks and Wildlife Service.