An Assessment of Marine Based Recreational Activity in the Isle of Man and its Relevance to the Manx Marine Nature Reserve Project

I carried out my summer placement with the Isle of Man Government in the Wildlife and Conservation – Marine sector. The Isle of Man Government is planning to set up a Marine Nature Reserve by 2011. The aim is to protect a site which will conserve wildlife biodiversity whilst minimising the effects on other stakeholders and providing a fair, transparent and collaborative process throughout.

My task was to develop an improved understanding of site use, patterns and spatial distribution of marine based recreational activities around the Island. This information would then aid in the decision for the Marine Nature Reserve site. Baseline data on site use in the marine and coastal environment was collected via effort based observation and stakeholder derived information.

I gained many skills from this placement including the organisation and development of an individual project. This placement gave me the chance to experience the real life problems and barriers faced in marine conservation, and the importance of stakeholder involvement. I feel this experience complemented the theory of the taught modules well.

During the 10 weeks I was on the Island I was lucky enough to see basking sharks, seals and dolphins and enjoy the beautiful Isle of Man coastline.