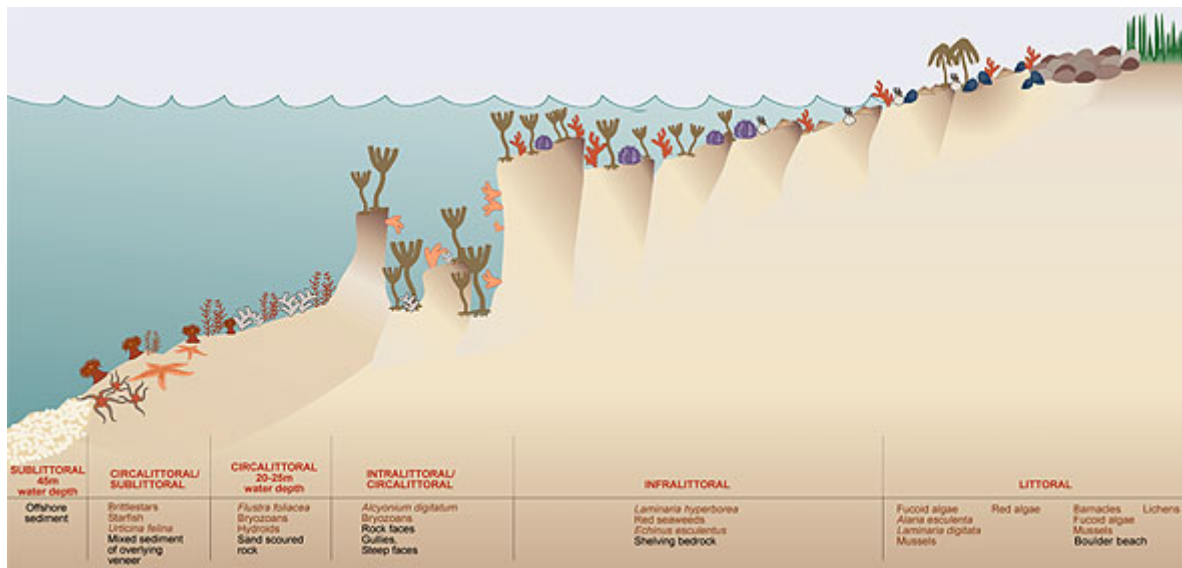


Environmental Description for the EMEC Wave Test Site

A boulder beach fronts the wave test site at Billia Croo, flanked to the north by the seacliffs of Black Craig and to the south by small cliffs and shelving bedrock. The species found are characteristic of a highly exposed rocky shoreline, such as the algae *Fucus distichus*. A full coastal survey of the flora and fauna has been undertaken, the results of which are and are illustrated below.



The seabed beneath the wave test site has sandy deposits towards the northern area, with glacial till overlying shallow bedrock to the southern end. Surveys at deeper sites showed some hard substrata with the area predominantly supporting sedimentary biotopes and biotopes characteristic of sand scoured rock.

The marine region has typical plankton diversity for northern British coastal waters and local fish species are also present. With regard to ornithological importance, there are no internationally or nationally significant species residing here. Minke whale and Risso's dolphin have been sighted and records further offshore indicate that white sided dolphin, killer whale and pilot whale use the area for passage although there are no known resident populations of cetaceans in the area.



The area is used for vessel passage, with the adjacent sea used by trawlers passing through on the way to preferred fishing grounds. Inshore fishing takes place around the test area targeting lobster and crab species. The wave test site is located within a charted area to be avoided by vessels larger than 5000grt.