



The Scottish
Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Planning Scotland's Seas Consultation 2013



A large, vibrant orange and red lobster is the central focus of the image, resting on a dark, textured surface. The lobster's long antennae extend across the frame, and its large claws are prominent. The lighting highlights the texture of its shell and the surrounding environment.

Scotland's seas are a vast and vital natural resource. Covering over 450,000 km² they are home to an awe-inspiring range of species and habitats; provide food and energy and contribute to our health and wellbeing.

Scotland's history and culture reflect our status as a maritime nation:

- 20% of our population live within 1 kilometre of the sea
- 50,000 people are employed in maritime industries
- Scotland has over 200 ports

We recognise that we must protect and enhance the marine environment so that it continues to provide economic and social benefits for future generations.

Management of marine industries has evolved over time to ensure that potential environmental impacts are taken into account when new activity is being proposed. However, it is recognised that a comprehensive system of marine planning would be beneficial.

Over Summer 2013, Marine Scotland will consult on a number of proposals to take forward integrated marine planning for Scotland's seas. This will include:

- A National Marine Plan
- Marine Protected Areas
- Offshore Renewable Energy
- Priority Marine Features
- Integration with Terrestrial Planning

This leaflet provides information on each of these proposals – for further information and to respond to the consultation proposals see:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/marineconsultation>

Email: marineconsultation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Facebook reference www.facebook.com/greenerScotland

Twitter reference [@greenerScotland](https://twitter.com/greenerScotland)

Planning Scotland's Seas – National Marine Plan

Marine Scotland is developing Scotland's first National Marine Plan. This will build on existing management regimes to provide one framework for all the activity which takes place in Scottish waters. The Plan sets out Scottish Ministers' objectives for the seas and national policies for sustainable development.

The Plan contains general policies designed to ensure that all future decisions lead to sustainable economic growth which is sensitive to the environment, other users and the long-term health of the seas. It also contains specific policies for certain activities, relating to economic productivity, environmental limits, interactions with other users and climate change.

Activities covered: Fisheries, Aquaculture, Wild Salmon, Oil and Gas, Carbon Capture and Storage, Renewables, Recreation and Tourism, Transport, Telecommunications, Defence, Aggregates.

The Plan includes some spatial policies – setting out areas which are designated for environmental protection purposes or which are preferred for certain types of development. These include proposals relating to Marine Protected Areas and Offshore Renewable Energy. Other policies set out issues to be taken into account by planners, developers, decision-makers and other users of the sea.

Planning Scotland's Seas – Marine Protected Areas

Marine Scotland is publishing proposals for a Marine Protected Area network (MPA). This network is designed to protect marine biodiversity (species and habitats) and geodiversity (landforms and natural processes that underpin the marine landscape).

There are already existing protected areas in our seas. These include:

- 45 Special Protection Areas for colonies of seabirds such as puffins and kittiwakes
- 46 Special Areas of Conservation for species and habitats such as bottlenose dolphins, coral reefs and seals
- 61 Sites of Specific Scientific Interest for the further protection of species such as seabirds and seals, and habitats including sea caves and rocky shores

New Nature Conservation MPAs are being identified for species, habitats and geology that we believe require more protection than what is offered by existing protected areas.



Planning Scotland's Seas – Offshore Renewable Energy

Scotland's seas have massive potential to provide renewable energy. They contain approximately 25% of Europe's tidal resource, 25% of its offshore wind resource and 10% of its wave potential. Harnessing this potential to develop a sustainable and successful offshore renewable energy industry in Scotland is a major priority for Scottish Ministers.

Marine Scotland is publishing Draft Plans which identify options for offshore wind, wave and tidal energy developments. The proposals are the culmination of a planning process which has considered the marine resource available, and the potential environmental and socio-economic impacts, to determine the most appropriate locations for future developments.

Planning Scotland's Seas – Priority Marine Features

Scientists have developed a list of Priority Marine Features – key habitats and species within Scotland's seas which would benefit from site-based protection and/or other management measures. The Marine Protected Areas proposals are designed to offer protection to many of these features and The National Marine Plan also proposes that these features should be specifically taken into account in future planning and decision-making.

Planning Scotland's Seas – Integration with Terrestrial Planning

All developments and activities which take place in Scotland's seas have implications onshore too – ranging from changing infrastructure requirements to the impacts on communities of economic growth or decline. The Scottish Government has produced a circular which explores the linkages between the marine and terrestrial planning systems and provides guidance about joint working.



Planning Scotland's Seas – an Ecosystem Approach

Marine planning is intended to introduce better integrated management of our seas in order to protect our marine ecosystem and the many services it provides – services which underpin social and economic wellbeing.

An ecosystem approach involves three key steps:

1) Consider natural systems – by using knowledge of interactions in nature and how ecosystems function.

Our current proposals do this in various ways. The National Marine Plan contains a number of policies designed to protect habitats and species key to ecosystem function (based on our current evidence base). Proposals for Marine Protected Areas and Priority Marine Features also take this into account. National Marine Plan policies and the approach to planning for offshore renewables acknowledge the potential ecosystem impacts of human activity and attempt to avoid or mitigate these.



2) Take account of the services that ecosystems provide.

Marine ecosystems provide numerous indirect and direct services. These include:

- the provision of food, medicine and bio-fuels
- regulation of the climate and pollution
- non-material benefits such as leisure and recreation opportunities and cultural and learning experiences

Marine planning approaches attempt to ensure that these services are valued and taken into account in making decisions about the sustainable use of our seas.

3) Involve people.

The Planning Scotland's Seas consultation process is a key opportunity for people to get involved in the future management of our waters.

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Planning Scotland's Seas – the Future

Following the Planning Scotland's Seas consultation process, responses and feedback will be analysed to assist in finalising:

- The Marine Protected Area network
- The Sectoral Marine Plans for offshore renewable energy
- The National Marine Plan which incorporates MPA and renewables spatial policy
- The list of Priority Marine Features
- The circular on the integration between marine and terrestrial planning

The National Marine Plan will inform future regional marine plans.



Further information

Marine Scotland will be hosting a series of public events around Scotland to discuss the consultations in more detail. These are free to attend and will be held in a number of locations and venues. Please visit the website below for more details.

Get in touch

All consultation documents and details of public events are available on our website:

www.scotland.gov.uk/marineconsultation

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Twitter reference **[@greenerScotland](https://twitter.com/greenerScotland)**

GIS information contained in the consultations is available from:

www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/marine/seamanagement/nmp/home



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