

Daniel Brown
Marine Directorate
DG Environment
Scottish Government
Room 511
Pentland House
47 Robb's Loan
Edinburgh

Your Ref:

Our Ref: FOCF/CON/0806/LBMR

04 June 2008

Dear Mr Brown

Consultation on a proposed Marine Reserve in Lamlash Bay

The Firth of Clyde Forum welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposal to establish a Marine Reserve in Lamlash Bay. The Forum is a voluntary partnership of local authorities, organisations, businesses, communities and individuals committed to working towards integrated, sustainable management of the Clyde's environmental, economic and community resources.

The other major Scottish firths have similar coastal fora and it is widely recognised that these provide effective mechanisms for delivering Integrated Coastal Zone Management locally, guided by agreed national policy. One of the main strengths of these partnerships is their long established, well recognised networks of a wide range of local coastal and marine stakeholder contacts. They are well placed and experienced in conducting community consultations, promoting a participative approach to coastal management, conflict resolution and project support and implementation in a cost effective manner. We believe that the involvement of the Forum in the Lamlash Bay Working Group highlights these strengths.

Consultation Questions

Question 1. Do you *agree* or *disagree* with the proposal to establish a Marine Reserve in Lamlash Bay?

The Firth of Clyde Forum agrees with the proposal to establish a Marine Reserve in Lamlash Bay.

Question 2. Do you think there would be any (a) positive or (b) negative implications should a Marine Reserve be established in Lamlash Bay?

The Firth of Clyde Forum believes that there will be a number of positive social, economic and environmental implications should a Marine Reserve be established in Lamlash Bay. Based on scientific research in other areas the Forum believes that it is likely that the cessation of fishing in the area will benefit the marine environment and associated marine communities. The establishment of Marine Reserve is likely to increase tourism in the area,

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diving tourism in particular, and a resultant positive economic impact is probable. In terms of social benefits the local community is very much behind the proposal and the Forum believes that the establishment of the Marine Reserve will further improve the local community spirit through the realisation of a long anticipated goal.

The Forum believes that the establishment of a Marine Reserve and the resultant positive implications will benefit not only the Lamlash Bay area but the Firth of Clyde as a whole.

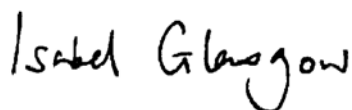
Question 3. Are there any other points which you would like to make in relation to the proposed Lamlash Bay Marine Reserve?

The issue of the Marine Reserve boundary is one which has not yet been agreed within the Lamlash Bay Working Group. The Forum hopes that discussions regarding the boundary will not prevent a Marine Reserve being established and believes that a compromise can be achieved by members of the group.

Despite the differing ideas on the Marine Reserve boundary the Forum believes that the process leading to the Marine Reserve proposal is a good example of community engagement and conflict resolution and that it has greatly improved the working relationships between the relevant groups within the Firth of Clyde.

I hope you find our comments useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this response further.

Yours sincerely



Isabel Glasgow
Chair,
Firth of Clyde Forum



Claire Pescod
Project Manager,
Firth of Clyde Forum